WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL CLOSE

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Winchester cathedral close

WINCHESTER
CATHEDRAL CLOSE

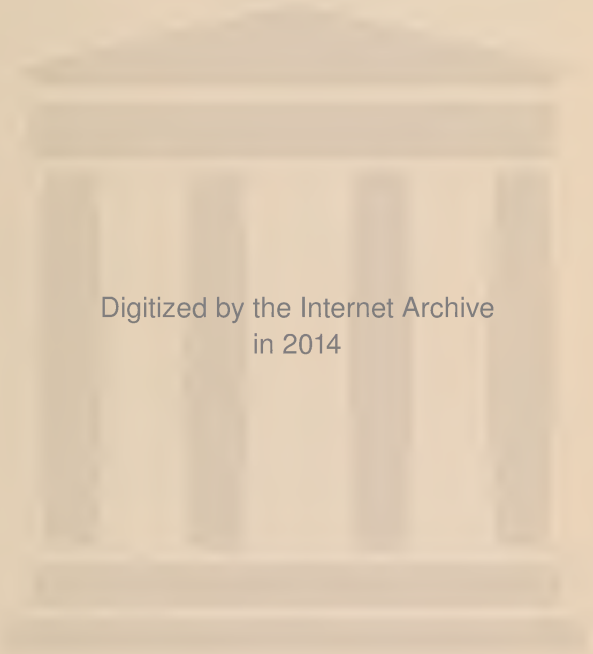

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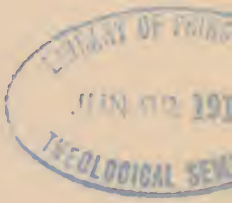
Photo by *W. T. Green, Winchester*

THE CLOSE GATEWAY

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL CLOSE

ITS HISTORICAL AND LITERARY ASSOCIATIONS



BY

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CANON RESIDENTIARY OF WINCHESTER

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To

The Dean and Chapter

of

Winchester

PREFACE

THE Cathedral Close of Winchester is so full of literary and historical associations that no apology is needed for the present volume. Rather it must remain a matter of surprise that a work specially dealing with the subject has been so long delayed. The materials, moreover, are not scanty, and owing in a great measure to the labours of the late Dean Kitchin in transcribing and editing so many of our old rolls and documents, are easily accessible. Indeed the result of his labours, published in the proceedings of the "Hampshire Record Society" and elsewhere, has rendered my task a comparatively light one, and I cannot well exaggerate my indebtedness to his antiquarian zeal.

In addition to Dean Kitchin's writings I have, of course, consulted the well-recognised authorities on Winchester, such as Bishop Milner's classical *History*,[1] the works of Gale, Warton, Wavell, Willis, Britton, and Woodward, as well as many other books, documents and publications too numerous to mention. To

[1] My references are to the third edition of this work.

the Abbot Gasquet's writings I would gratefully acknowledge my obligations, especially to his great work on the English monasteries, and to his charming essays on mediaeval libraries. In the chapter entitled "The Cradle of English Prose" I found much assistance from an excellent little treatise on "King Aelfred," by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, and from the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. The second volume of *Winchester Cathedral Documents*, edited by the late Dean Stephens and by Canon Madge our Cathedral librarian, and published by the "Hampshire Record Society," was of much service in connection with the period of the Commonwealth and the Restoration; while in Chapter II (Part II) Sir George Warner's "Introduction" to the facsimile edition of St. Aethelwold's *Benedictional* proved to be invaluable.

Some of the chapters in this volume have already appeared, in whole or in part, in various reviews and magazines, and I desire to express my obligations to those editors who have kindly allowed me to reproduce them. To the editor of *The Treasury* my thanks are specially due, for as many as ten papers, in a more or less complete form, first saw the light in the pages of his excellent

magazine. The chapter entitled "Bishop Morley's Library" was published in *The Fortnightly;* those headed "After the Reformation" and "At the Commonwealth" appeared as one article in *The Church Quarterly;*[1] part of the chapter entitled "St. Swithun's Scriptorium" appeared in *The English Church Review;* while "The Birds of the Close" enjoyed the hospitality of *The Cornhill.* To the editors and proprietors of these publications I tender my cordial and grateful thanks.

For several of the illustrations and for the Plan of the Close I am indebted to Mr. N. C. H. Nisbett, our able architectural surveyor. I specially desire to place on record the help I have received from my esteemed friend Mr. Francis Joseph Baigent, whose intimate knowledge of Winchester and whose wide antiquarian learning has ever been placed most generously at my disposal.

JOHN VAUGHAN.

The Close, Winchester.
Christmas, 1913.

[1] For October, 1911, under the title "Winchester Cathedral Library from the Reformation to the Commonwealth."

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PART I

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL CLOSE

CHAPTER I

IN ANCIENT DAYS

THE Close of Winchester Cathedral occupies a site of hoary antiquity. In primeval days it was doubtless a desolate swamp, with thick jungles of reeds and rushes, the haunt of snipe and curlew, of bittern and avocet, and other wildfowl. In very early times, however, the position was occupied by some Celtic tribe, whose flint implements are still occasionally picked up on the adjacent downs, where their barrows or burying-places may be seen. For some three hundred years it was the site of a Roman settlement, from which straight roads diverged to Porchester, Silchester, Sarum, and other stations. If we may trust our monastic chronicler, Thomas Rudborne, who quotes from a lost work by one Vigilantius,[1] as early as the year 169 a

[1] See Willis' paper in *Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute* for 1845, p. 3 *n*.

Christian church was here founded by the British king, Lucius, who also established a community of monks. During the Diocletian persecution (A.D. 266), which raged even in Britain, the church and monastery were destroyed, and the monks, including St. Amphibalus, were slain. Later on a new church was built and dedicated to the martyred saint. When at length the pagan Saxons under King Cerdic ruled the land, the church of St. Amphibalus was converted into a heathen temple, and so remained for nearly one hundred and fifty years. Then came the missionary Birinus, who in the year 635 converted Cynegils the king, and all his people to Christianity. The king, we learn, destroyed the heathen temple and set about building, doubtless on the same spot, a Cathedral church, which was completed by his son, Cenwalh and dedicated by Birinus in the year of Our Lord 648. For more than three hundred years the Cathedral of Cenwalh, associated with the names of King Aelfred and of St. Swithun, remained the mother-church of the diocese, when it was replaced by the more magnificent minster of St. Aethelwold, and duly consecrated in the presence of King Aethelred, Archbishop

Dunstan, and other notable personages on 20th October, 980. For a time also Winchester was the seat of a great Scandinavian empire, and it was over the high altar of St. Aethelwold's Cathedral that King Cnut hung up his golden crown in token of his fealty to Christ. Later on followed the Norman invasion, when, after the manner of the conquerors, the Saxon churches were everywhere rebuilt ; and Bishop Waekelin erected the splendid Cathedral of which the main portions remain until this day. The building was consecrated in 1093 " in the presence," we are told, " of almost all the bishops and abbots of England," and on 15th July the sacred relics of St. Swithun were solemnly enshrined in the new church. The Benedictine community, established by St. Aethelwold a century before, continued to flourish beneath the shelter of the great cathedral until the time of the Reformation, when, with other similar establishments, it was dissolved by Henry VIII.

Such, in rapid outline, are some of the changes which the spot known as the Cathedral Close has witnessed during a period of over two thousand years. The very names by which the locality has been called bear

2—(2306)

witness to its many vicissitudes. The early Caer Gwent, the Roman Venta Belgarum, the tenth-century Winteceastre, the modern Winchester, all testify to successive stages of growth and civilisation. Temples of Concord and of Apollo doubtless once stood within a stone's throw of the present Cathedral. The Cathedral itself is probably the fifth Christian edifice that has occupied the situation, while from the second century to the sixteenth, with certain periods of interruption, a community of monks ministered upon the spot.

It is, therefore, not surprising if now and again during some work of excavation the spade should reveal relics of bygone history. This, indeed, has been not infrequently the case, especially during the time of underpinning the Cathedral, including the building of the new buttresses, carried out during the years 1905–1912.

The most ancient relic, which takes us back to a period anterior to Christianity, consisted of a bronze ring, which was found embedded in the peat, ten to twelve feet below the surface, at the south-east angle of the south transept of the Cathedral. The "find" which was submitted to the authorities

of the British Museum, is pronounced to be of late Celtic workmanship, "well made, having a wavy pattern in a groove round the middle of the outside."[1] Its original use was possibly connected with harness, and its probable date somewhere about B.C. 50, the time of Julius Caesar's invasion.

Considering that Winchester was a Roman settlement for some three hundred years, it was not unnaturally expected that some evidence of Roman occupation would be brought to light. A few years ago a fine piece of tesselated pavement was unearthed in one of the Close gardens, showing conclusively that a Roman villa once stood upon the spot. Early in 1911, while excavating beneath the wall of the south aisle of the Cathedral, near to Bishop Curle's slype, the workmen came upon, at a depth of eight feet below the present surface, another piece of tesselated pavement. The fragment,[2] which measured three feet and a half by two feet, was with great care lifted entire, and was seen to be of geometrical arrangement in three colours—red, buff, and

[1] This relic is now preserved in the Cathedral Library.
[2] Now in the Deanery vestibule.

black. The tesserae when first uncovered were as brilliant as when they were arranged by Roman workmen at least sixteen centuries ago, but on exposure to the light and air the colours gradually faded. It was interesting to notice that the pattern, both in design and colour, was similar to that of another example discovered in Little Minster Street some years ago and now preserved in the City museum. Immediately under the tesselated pavement was found a Roman coin, which proved to be a *sestertius* of the Emperor Nero, and close by a *dupondius* of Claudius, thus carrying us back to the first century of the Christian era. In the same excavation, but at a slightly lower level, there was also discovered, in addition to broken fragments of pottery and a number of red Roman tiles, a large ovoid *dolium* or urn which was found to contain pieces of bone and other remains of incineration. The vessel, which measured eighteen inches in height and had a pointed base, was made of a coarse, buff-coloured ware, and was unbroken except for injuries it had received long ages ago. The rim of the vessel was missing, and the top had been covered over with two loose pieces of broken pottery,

through which the water and mud had percolated. The custom of using such imperfect receptacles as depositories for ashes seems to have been not uncommon, and other examples have been discovered in the neighbourhood of Winchester. Close to where the *dolium* was found the workmen came upon, at a depth of nine feet from the surface, a rough flint wall some eighteen inches in thickness and of a semicircular shape. That the masonry was older than the Cathedral was evident, for the wall ran beneath the present Norman foundations. Being in the form of an apse, it was thought at first that the foundation might have belonged to an earlier Saxon church; but the apsidal end pointed towards the west, and in all probability the wall was the work of Roman masons, and had some connection with the villa to which the tesselated pavement belonged.

An extremely rare and interesting relic of Anglo-Saxon times was dug up in the Close, on the south side of the Cathedral, in the year 1905. It consists of a circular bronze brooch a little more than an inch in diameter, and with the pin and fastenings intact. The central ornament or disc is surrounded by a border of five concentric dotted lines,

across which is inscribed the name " HEREMOD " in a retrograde and blundering manner. The brooch has been submitted to the authorities of the British Museum, and the Keeper of Coins tells us that its main interest is due to the fact that " the central disc is a copy of the reverse type of a penny of Edward the Elder, son of Alfred the Great, from which it only varies in not having a rosette at each termination of the straight line above the name " HEREMOD " which in the case of the coin is that of the "moneyer." " It is evident," he adds, " that the maker of the brooch copied his design from an impression of the penny of Edward, and, as he was probably unable to read, he only reproduced the impression as it lay before him, and in consequence inscribed the name backwards. The inscription is too crude to suggest that the brooch was cast in a mould made from the coin itself, in which case it would not have been retrograde. Edward's reign extended from A.D. 901 to 925. As, however, the coins of this type must have been struck somewhat late in his reign, we cannot put the making of the brooch earlier than about 920 A.D. It probably occurred some little time later." It

will be allowed that this ancient ornament,[1] in a state of almost perfect preservation, carrying us back in thought for a thousand years to a time when King Alfred's shade was said to haunt the cloisters, is a relic of rare interest.

Of the period when Winchester was the centre of a Danish kingdom a striking momento was discovered, some twelve feet below the surface, at the south-east corner of the south transept of the Cathedral. It consists of a strip or panel of engraved bronze, ten inches and a half in length, an inch and a half in breadth, and of about the thickness of a halfpenny. The panel is covered with a curious "interlacing scroll-work springing from a cruciform pattern at the centre, and the ground is indicated by closely-punched rings." The cruciform pattern is of the form of a Greek cross, and the general style of decoration is one with which Scandinavian archaeologists are familiar. The edges of the panel are slightly broken in places, but the rivet-holes remain in an almost perfect condition, and consist of seven at each end, with a single hole in the centre. This "find" too, has been

[1] Now in the Cathedral Library.

submitted to the antiquarian department of the British Museum, and it is pronounced to be an object of remarkable interest, being of Viking or Scandinavian workmanship, and of a date probably ranging between the years 1000 and 1050. With regard to its use, it is suggested that it may have been attached to a book-cover, or possibly to a coffin. The former suggestion seems to be the most probable, for no traces of any other material were found with it, and the panel is just such an ornament as might have been affixed to the binding of some valuable manuscript. The relic is now carefully preserved in the Cathedral Library.

CHAPTER II

THE MONASTIC ENCLOSURE

THERE is a deep sense of quiet and seclusion associated with monastic churches and remains. They retain something of their ancient peace. The precincts of Westminster Abbey, the cloisters of Gloucester Cathedral, the ruins of Tintern or of Netley Abbey, all testify to mediaeval piety and repose. When Edmund Burke visited Westminster Abbey, "the very silence," he said, "seemed sacred." Similar testimony is borne by Addison and Gray, by Daniel Webster and Washington Irving. So, too, with our great Puritan poet :—

> "Let my due feet never fail
> To walk the studious cloisters pale,
> And love the high embowed roof,
> With antick pillars massy proof,
> And storied windows richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light." [1]

Nowhere is this feeling more deeply realised than in the monastic enclosure of St. Swithun's Priory now known as the Cathedral Close of Winchester. Its history

[1] Milton's *Penseroso*, 155-160.

may be roughly divided into two distinct periods, the one when for over six hundred years it formed the precincts of a great Benedictine house, and the other dating from the Dissolution of the monastery in the sixteenth century to the present time. The line of demarcation is a deep one, and it is sometimes difficult as one wanders through the well-kept close, with its picturesque houses and tranquil lawns, to conjure up in imagination the days of old when a priory occupied the site, and black-robed brethren moved about the sacred enclosure.

The appearance of the Close has almost entirely changed since the days of the Benedictine monks. Most of the Priory buildings have disappeared. The cloisters were destroyed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and only a few piers and arches of the Norman chapter-house remain to testify to its former beauty. The enclosure, however, is still entered by the ancient monastic gateway, and girt about with lofty mediaeval walls, and sheltered by the same mighty cathedral. The Prior's hall or refectory is still standing and forms part of the present deanery. The convent stables may also be seen ; and part of the guest-house or pilgrim's hall on the

Photo by *H. Joel*

THE PRIOR'S HALL, OR REFECTORY
(*now part of The Deanery*)

eastern side of Mirabel Close. In one of the houses a fine vaulted chamber is used as a dining-hall. The underground water-courses, known as the Lockbourne, which formerly cleansed the monastery, also remain ; and the swift stream of clear water, introduced by St. Aethelwold in the tenth century, still murmurs of monastic peace.

Changed as is the appearance of the Close since the time of the Dissolution, it yet remains the very same enclosure which for six hundred years was dedicated to the Benedictine duties of work and prayer, and which has witnessed more than one interesting event in English history. Here are memories of gentle saints like St. Swithun, of mighty churchmen like St. Aethelwold, of learned men like Prior Godfrey, of statesman-bishops such as Wykeham and Waynflete, as Richard Fox, and Stephen Gardiner. Within the Close flourished, too, for many centuries a school of art and learning, at one time the most famous in Europe ; while to the shrine of St. Swithun there flocked for many centuries thousands of pilgrims from every quarter.

Sometimes events of a more historic character took place within the monastic

enclosure. The chroniclers declare that the red-hot plough-shares over which Queen Emma walked unharmed in the nave of the Cathedral were afterwards buried in the Close near the refectory. Early in August, 1100, the body of the Red King, dripping gore all the way, was borne in "a crazy two-wheeled cart of a charcoal-burner" from the New Forest to St. Swithun's Priory for burial within the Cathedral church. With the good brethren of the monastery Richard I feasted merrily after his return from captivity. In the Norman chapter-house the worst of English kings humbled himself at the feet of Archbishop Langton. On St. James' Day, 1554, amid every accompaniment of splendour, the ill-starred marriage of Queen Mary and Philip of Spain was celebrated by Bishop Gardiner in the Cathedral. Later on, in the days of the great Rebellion, the Close was looted by the rough troopers of the Parliament, who found, we are told, "large store of Popish books, pictures, and crucifixes" in the Canons' houses. After the Restoration we catch glimpses of Charles II, who often stayed at the Deanery and held his receptions in the long gallery. At that time the aged Izaak Walton was living in the Close

with his daughter and son-in-law William Hawkins who was a Prebendary of the Cathedral. His kinsman, Thomas Ken, was also a Prebendary; and good Bishop Morley was residing at Wolvesey on the other side of St. Aethelwold's stream. It is pleasant to think of the friends taking sweet counsel together in the old monastic enclosure, and to remember that three out of the four lie buried in the vast Cathedral. "In death they were not divided."

Such are some of the memories associated with the Close of Winchester. The conditions of life have changed indeed since St. Swithun persuaded the monks and King Aethelbald to build the original monastic walls. Other aims and interests, other conceptions of life and duty are now predominant; even religion itself is presented in another form. But the stillness of eternity still rests upon the sacred enclosure; the vain noises of the world are shut out, and "folly's dancing foam melts if it cross the threshold."

CHAPTER III

THE CLOSE WALLS

THERE is a peculiar fascination about old walls. They speak to us persuasively of the past, and conjure up thoughts of bygone legends and history. The Roman walls of Silchester and of Porchester, the ancient town walls of Southampton, the monastic walls of Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight, or of Beaulieu Abbey in the New Forest, are alike eloquent with echoes of departed days. Strange plants, too, are often found on ancient walls where they have maintained their position perhaps for centuries; and birds love to build their nests in the broken and crumbling masonry.

The Close walls of Winchester, which shut in the monastic enclosure, are full of interest. The original wall, on the foundation of which the present structure is reared, dates back to the time of Aethelbald in the ninth century. It is said that St. Swithun persuaded the king and the monks to build this wall around the precinct of the Cathedral against the incursions of the Danes. There is nothing

improbable in the tradition. For the kindly and sagacious saint, as we learn from the old chronicles, was "a diligent builder of churches in the diocese, and a repairer of those that had been ruined." Moreover, as William of Malmesbury tells us, he built a stone bridge over the river Itchen, which excited great wonder and admiration. At the time when St. Swithun was busy with his monastic wall, Aelfred was in all probability living with the good bishop, who acted towards him as tutor and guardian, in the palace of Wolvesey hard by, and the boy must have watched the rising masonry with interest. The wisdom of the undertaking was soon manifest, for in the year 860 the Danes, as we learn from the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, "stormed Winchester," though we do not read that they harried the monastery. In after years, too, on one occasion at least, the walls helped to save the priory. In 1264, in the troublous times of Henry III, the citizens, fearing lest the monks should admit Simon de Montfort into the city, made a furious onslaught on the convent. The walls barred their approach, but a fierce fight took place at the convent gate, and several of the monks were slain. At length

the citizens, failing to obtain an entry, set fire to the gate, which, together with the adjoining King's Gate and the church of St. Swithun over it, was burnt down.[1]

The ancient and lofty walls, which with the mighty grey fabric of the church entirely surround the Close, give to it a deep sense of seclusion and security. The present gate, built in the fifteenth century, is shut and barred every night, at ten o'clock in the summer and at nine o'clock in the winter, when unbroken silence reigns, save for the hooting of the brown owls whose home is in the hollow elms of Mirabel Close. The walls in places are no less than eighteen feet in height. Built originally of flint and rubble, the masonry has been repaired again and again in the course of centuries, sometimes with stone, and sometimes with thin, richly-coloured bricks, until at length it presents an appearance of checkered and hoary antiquity. The wide coping of red tiles gives to it an additional touch of charm, while wherever in the crumbling masonry a wild plant can obtain a foothold it flourishes happily out of harm's way.

[1] Kitchin's *Winchester* in "Historic Towns" series, p. 130.

It is indeed wonderful what a rich and varied flora manages to exist on the walls of the Close. In early spring a number of tiny plants will be found in blossom along the coping. The first to flower—a favourite with all lovers of our native flora—is the little *Draba verna* or whitlow grass. Before the end of February this humble but attractive plant, with small, white flowers, will be seen all along the crannied walls of the Close. Later on, when the whitlow grass is in seed, the mouse-ear chickweed, the rue-leaved saxifrage, the procumbent pearl-wort, and several kinds of *veronica* or speedwell, will appear in abundance, and in places the grey walls will be resplendent with the yellow wallflower. Like several other species which only frequent walls and ruins, the "yellow stocke gilloflowre," as the herbalists called it, can hardly be considered indigenous, and some authorities ascribe its introduction into Britain to the agency of the Romans. But it is now so completely naturalised that it would be sheer pedantry to refuse it a position in the British flora; and on the walls of the old Priory, and of Wolvesey Castle hard by, it has doubtless flourished since the days of the Benedictine monks. As summer

advances other and even more conspicuous flowers will be blooming on the walls. The coping will be covered with spreading cushions of the yellow *sedum* or biting stonecrop, and masses of the red spur-valerian, and of *Antirrhinum majus* or great snapdragon with its varied and richly-coloured flowers, will make a gorgeous display. Tall spikes, too, of the great yellow mullein will stand sentinel over the walls, and add dignity and distinction to the flora of the Close. Another plant, though like the wallflower not an indigenous species, which calls for special notice on account of its rarity and beauty, is the *Linaria purpurea*, or purple toadflax. Found nowhere else in Hampshire it blossoms abundantly on the western wall of the Close. A native of the mountains of Southern Europe, it is a stately and elegant plant, with tall thin spikes of purple flowers which render it very conspicuous.

A near relative of *Linaria purpurea* is the lovely little ivy-leaved toadflax which in places creeps all over the Close walls. In the sixteenth century it seems to have been unknown as a wild plant, for both Gerard and Parkinson speak of it as "growing wilde upon walls in Italy, but in gardens with us."

It was doubtless, therefore, unlike the pellitory-of-the-wall, a stranger to the monks in mediaeval times. The latter species, however, was widely known for its medicinal virtues. Then, as now,

> "The mouldering walls were seen
> Hung with pellitory green";

and we may think of good brother Walter de Longestocke,[1] M.A., the physician-monk or Infirmarian of the Convent in the early part of the fourteenth century, plucking many a handful of the precious herb to make a decoction for the ease and comfort of those poor brothers troubled with "stone and gravell"—a terribly common complaint in the Middle Ages; or "boiling into a syrup with honey, a spoonful of which was to be drunk every morning by such as were subject to the dropsy." With the pellitory-of-the-wall are growing on the north walls of the Close a few plants of the blue flea-bane a choice and distinguished species.

In places the walls are thickly covered with dense growths of ivy, which ever loves to mantle old towers and ruins. Until recently it entirely obscured an interesting

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls* (Hants. Record Society), pp. 78, 101, 122.

relic of the Stuart period. Among the prebendaries appointed by Bishop Morley was Dr. John Nicholas, Warden of College, and a friend of Thomas Ken the author of our Morning and Evening Hymns. The Warden, who built "School," occupied as his prebendal house the one now known as No. 3, the garden of which is separated from College Street by the Close wall. In deference to the learned prebendary, and in consideration, no doubt, of his double duties as Warden of College and as Canon of the Cathedral, the Dean and Chapter permitted a doorway to be pierced in the Close wall, through which Dr. Nicholas could conveniently make his way from his prebendal house to the warden's lodgings. The site of this doorway had long been forgotten. But a short time since, in removing a vast growth of ivy, the bricked-up entrance was discovered. There was the doorway, cut through the massive masonry of the Close wall, through which the Warden was wont to pass to his College duties. He has been dead now more than two hundred years, but henceforth the bricked-up doorway, stripped of its concealing ivy, will serve to remind succeeding canons, who are privileged

to occupy No. 3, of the Prebendary and Warden who lies buried, close to Izaak Walton, in Prior Silkstede's Chapel in the south transept of the Cathedral.

Another doorway, on the opposite side of the Close, is associated with the Court of Charles II. The gay monarch, so it is said, had the passage made, to suit his own convenience, during his repeated visits to Winchester, when he not infrequently occupied the Deanery. It is now, like the doorway of Dr. Nicholas, blocked up, for the Close is a sacred enclosure, and not to be lightly entered by unauthorised ways; but the filled-in portals serve to remind us of interesting episodes in the story of the Close walls, which bear witness to the changes of a thousand years.

CHAPTER IV

THE RUINED CHAPTER-HOUSE

Among the most picturesque remains of the old Benedictine monastery are those of the Norman Chapter-house. It was built by Bishop Walkelin, a kinsman of William the Conqueror, at the close of the eleventh century, partly, it would seem, out of the proceeds of St. Giles's Fair granted to him by the Red King. The building stood immediately south of the dark cloister or slype, which led to the cemetery of the monastery, and like most of the Benedictine Chapter-houses was of rectangular or longitudinal form, being eighty-eight feet by thirty-eight feet in size. The vaulted roof was supported by a large central pillar, and was covered on the outside, above the dormitories, with sheets of lead. On the north, south, and east walls ran an arcade, with round-headed arches and cylindrical shafts, which formed stone seats for the brethren attending the Chapter. On the west side five Norman arches on large circular columns with cushion

Photo by *H. Joel*

REMAINS OF CHAPTER-HOUSE

capitals, like those of the triforium in the south transept, opened to the cloisters, the middle arch being wider and higher than the rest. These fine arches remain in an almost perfect condition, and with their great monolith columns which are believed to have been parts of some Roman building, present a striking appearance as one wanders through the Close. They also constitute, as it has been pointed out,[1] a valuable example of the arrangement of an eleventh-century chapter-house entrance. On the north wall the arcade of twenty-three semicircular arches may also be traced, but the cylindrical shafts have all unfortunately disappeared.

The Chapter-house was the council chamber of the Benedictine monastery. The word chapter (*capitulum*) denoted both the room of assembly and the assembly itself. It was the place of business for the whole community. Its general purpose is nowhere better described than in the quaint words of Abbot Ware of Westminster. "It is," he says, "the Little House in which the Convent meets to consult for its welfare. It is well called the *Capitulum*, because it is the *caput litium* (the head of strifes), for there

[1] *Victoria History of Hampshire*, vol. v, p. 59.

strifes are ended. It is the workshop of the Holy Spirit, in which the sons of God are gathered together. It is the house of confession, the house of obedience, mercy, and forgiveness, the house of unity, peace, and tranquillity, where the brethren make satisfaction for their faults."[1] In the Chapter-house the community assembled to perform such important business as the election of the diocesan bishop and of their own prior. Here, too, on Ash Wednesday, a suitable codex was assigned to each of the brethren for special study during the season of Lent.[2] Sometimes the priors were buried in the Chapter-house. At least, we learn from the monastic chronicler, that Prior Godfrey, a wise and learned man whose praises are sung by William of Malmesbury,[3] and who ruled over the house for seven-and-twenty years, was interred in it, "towards the north-west corner."[4] The Chapter-house was built during his term of office, and it was fitting that the distinguished Prior who had seen the

[1] Quoted by Dean Stanley in his *Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, 5th ed., p. 372.

[2] Rule of St. Benedict, quoted by Putnam, *Books and Their Makers*, vol. i, p. 29.

[3] *Chronicles of the Kings of England*, Bohn's "Antiquarian Library," Book V, p. 475.

[4] Milner's *Winchester*, vol. ii, p. 135.

building rise from the ground, should find a resting-place within its walls.

Sometimes events of a more national character and importance took place within the Chapter-house of St. Swithun's monastery. Here, for instance, on 20th July, 1213, was enacted the final scene of that degrading and dishonourable transaction whereby King John surrendered his crown and kingdom into the hands of the Pope. Already at Dover, a few months before, he had knelt before the Papal Legate Pandulf and had sworn fealty to the Roman See; but he was still under the sentence of excommunication, and his reconciliation with the Church took place at Winchester. As Archbishop Langton, with a number of distinguished persons, both clerical and lay, approached the city, the King went out to meet them on the downs of Magdalen-hill, and on "seeing the archbishop and bishops," says the chronicler, "he fell prostrate on the earth at their feet, beseeching them with tears to have pity on him. The Archbishop and bishops raised the King up, and conducted him on the right hand and on the left to the great western door of the Cathedral, where they chanted the 51st Psalm." They

did not, however, yet enter the church, the King being an excommunicated person, but adjourned to the Chapter-house, where he was absolved "as holy Church ordains." The Archbishop then led the King into the Cathedral, where mass was sung at the high altar, and John presented a mark of gold.[1] The scene in the Chapter-house when the King humbled himself at the feet of Archbishop Langton must have left a deep impression on the minds of the spectators.

Some thirty-seven years later another royal scene took place in the Chapter-house. William de Raley, Bishop of Winchester, had just died in France, and King Henry III, anxious to obtain the vacant See for his half-brother Audemar, or Ethelmar—an acolyte of only twenty-three—hastened to the Cathedral city, and assembling the monks together in the Chapter-room, himself preached to them a sermon on the text, "Justice and peace have kissed each other." The purport of the discourse, which was not unmixed with threats, was to induce the Prior, William of Taunton, and the brethren to choose Audemar for their bishop. The poor monks were in a painful and difficult

[1] *Milner*, i, p. 180.

position. They knew that Audemar, as the historian says,[1] was "destitute of every necessary qualification for the prelacy": on the other hand they had only recently learnt, by bitter experience, the consequences of thwarting the King's will. At length with "assenting voices, but repugnant hearts" they yielded, and the half-brother of the royal preacher became Bishop Elect of Winchester. On another occasion, when Henry III and his gallant son Edward were at variance on some question of policy, they appear to have referred the matter to the Prior of St. Swithun's, and were happily reconciled in the monastic Chapter-house.[2] Prince Edward seems to have had a great regard for the Benedictine brethren, for we find him before starting for a crusade in 1270, taking leave of the monks assembled in chapter, and commending himself to their prayers.

For five centuries and a half the Norman Chapter-house of Bishop Walkelin served the purpose of its erection. There, successive

[1] *Milner*, i, p. 187. See, too, Kitchin's *Winchester* in "Historic Towns" series, pp. 125-128.
[2] *Milner*, i, p. 191.

priors presided over the deliberations of the brethren. There much of the business of the monastery was transacted. There spiritual counsel was given, faults were confessed, and discipline administered. Since Prior Godfrey has been laid to rest in the north-west corner in 1107, all his successors had been chosen in that room. There, too, the Bishops of Winchester had been elected by the votes of Prior and brethren. On occasions, too, kings and other great personages had played a part within its walls. But with the dissolution of the Priory in 1540 the conventual buildings were quickly adapted to meet the new requirements. The Chapter-house and the cloisters were not, however, for the moment interfered with. For some thirty years they remained as in monastic days—the Chapter-house no doubt continuing to be the place of meeting of the newly-constituted Dean and Canons, while the beautiful cloisters ran as of yore along the south side of the Cathedral nave and around the cloister-garth. But in the year 1560 Robert Horne was appointed by Queen Elizabeth to the Bishopric of Winchester. He had been Dean of Durham under Edward VI, and during the Marian persecutions had

lived abroad, where he ministered to the English congregation at Frankfort-on-the-Main. He was undoubtedly a man of learning, but, as Anthony Wood says, "one of the greatest enemies which the monuments of art and the ancient rites of religion found at the Reformation."[1] At Durham he had been noted for the barbarous havoc he had committed. As Bishop of Winchester he frequently "visited," we are told, "the Cathedral and College, Magdalen, Corpus, Trinity, and New Colleges, destroying the images, pictures, missals, painted glass, and other tokens of the religion and piety of his ancestors, with a zeal as furious as it was ridiculous." Winchester suffered severely at his hands. He "cleared every statue from its niche in the Cathedral." Moreover, during his episcopacy the venerable cloisters were pulled down, and also the Norman Chapter-house, for the sake, it would seem, of turning the leaden roofs into money. It is impossible to condemn this desecration too strongly. Not only did the removal of the cloisters seriously weaken the Cathedral itself, but the appearance of the church on

[1] *Fasti*, Bliss' ed., vol. ii, col. 180, under 1567. See, too, Cassan's *Lives of the Bishops of Winchester*, vol. ii, pp. 26-30.

its south side has been irretrievably spoilt. The demolition of the Chapter-house, too, was a grievous wrong; but we may be thankful that the western front with its fine Norman arches and mighty monoliths remain, to remind us of the days that are past, and to add beauty and distinction to the Cathedral Close.

CHAPTER V

THE PRIOR'S HALL

Of the domestic buildings of St. Swithun's monastery still remaining, the most considerable is the Prior's Hall or Refectory, which forms part of the present Deanery. The hall is a fine perpendicular building of the middle of the fifteenth century, with a high-pitched, open-timbered roof, and with five noble traceried windows on the west side, one of which is blocked up. The date of the roof is fixed by an entry in the monastic rolls of Manydown Manor,[1] which states that in 1459 three huge oak-trees felled at Manydown were sent to the Prior of St. Swithun's for the roof of his great hall. There are evidences, however, as Dr. Milner has pointed out,[2] that the building itself is of higher antiquity than the roof and windows—evidences which seem to indicate that there is nothing improbable in his conjecture that

[1] Transcribed and edited by Dean Kitchin (*Hampshire Record Society*, 1895), p. 8.

[2] Vol. ii, p. 139.

when in the year 1333, Bishop Adam de Orlton was entertained by Prior Alexander at St. Swithun's monastery, it was in the great hall still standing that he listened to the celebrated minstrel Herbert, who sang to him "the legendary songs of Guy, Earl of Warwick, overthrowing and killing Colbrand the Danish giant under the walls of the city, and of Queen Emma walking unhurt over the red-hot ploughshares in the Old Minster."

Interesting as is the Prior's Hall, a far more picturesque appendage of the Deanery is the beautiful arcade of groined work which now forms its main entrance. It is older, too, than the Prior's Hall as we see it to-day by nearly two hundred years, going back to the days of Henry III. It consists of three fine arches (a fourth is built into the house) sharply pointed, and with the Purbeck marble shafts of the thirteenth century. This groined cloister abutted on the Prior's Refectory, and thither no doubt the pilgrims, who had come to worship in St. Swithun's church, or on their way to Becket's shrine at Canterbury, would betake themselves before leaving the monastery, to receive some broken victuals from the Prior's kitchen,

Photo by *H. Joel*

DEANERY

(*showing the Thirteenth-century Cloister*)

and perhaps a few pence from out of the aumbry still visible in the wall.[1]

Above this elegant arcade, which has been not inaptly called the Pilgrims' cloister, there was added in post-Reformation times an "audit-house" for the transaction of Chapter business. The old place of meeting in monastic times had been the Norman Chapter-house, which was wantonly demolished about the year 1570, and it was doubtless shortly after this date that the present apartment was built.

At the time of the Commonwealth we gain several interesting particulars as to the condition of the Deanery. A survey[2] of the property of the Dean and Chapter was made in 1649 when the Close was sequestered, and the Deanery made over to Nicholas Love, Esq. The Prior's Refectory is described as "a very faire large Hall contayning by Estimacon twentye yards in length and Tenn in bredth, with a very faire staircase of stone. The Roofe of very good Tymber covered with Tyle, the walls of the said Hall

[1] Dean Kitchin's "Introduction" to "The Obedientiary Rolls of St. Swithun's Priory" (*Hampshire Record Society*, 1892), p. 11.

[2] Printed in "Winchester Cathedral Documents" (*Hampshire Record Society*, 1897), vol. ii, pp. 76-77.

beinge of stone, the windowes well barred with iron halfe glazed, the other halfe shutters of wood, the floore thereof beinge supported with extraordinary good Tymber." The "Audite-house" consisted of "twoe roomes adjoyneinge." There were "fowerteene lodginge chambers," one "faire dyninge Roome wainscotted and ceeled with plaine Wainscott," "one faire studye wainscotted with draw boxes of Wainscott," and "Twoe Courtyards paved." There was also "a large Dovehouse," and "three small Fishponds" in the garden. At that time many of the features of the Prior's old quarters still remained. Although the monastery had been dissolved a century before, yet the great Refectory had not yet been divided into separate apartments; and inside the thirteenth-century arcade which formed a sort of vestibule to the house there existed a courtyard paved with flagstones as in mediaeval times.

But with the Restoration great changes were made in "the Deanes house." Charles II had taken a fancy to Winchester, and preparations were being made for the building of a splendid palace, after the model of Versailles, under the direction of Sir

Christopher Wren. In the meanwhile the King was not infrequently in the Cathedral city, when he appears to have taken up his residence at the Deanery, to which important additions were made. A stately hall and staircase took the place of the old open courtyard ; the great Refectory was divided into two stories, and partitioned off into rooms, dormer-windows being inserted in the roof to give light to the upper chambers ; and the minstrels' gallery at the north end of the hall was done away with. In addition to these alterations, Dr. Clarke, who was Dean of Winchester from A.D. 1665 to 1679, erected the long, narrow, red-brick building, appropriately known as the " Long Gallery." This beautiful and imposing apartment, underneath which runs an open corridor, is no less than eighty-four feet long, and is lighted by windows opening to the south of which the middle one, with good perpendicular tracery, was probably brought from the south end of the Prior's Hall, perhaps during the alterations then carried out. According to tradition, the Long Gallery was used by Charles II as a reception room on the occasion of his visits to Winchester. In the windows are several interesting fragments

of stained glass, some of them going back to monastic days. There is a figure of St. Peter, the heads of two saints, and the name of Thomas Silkstede, Prior of the monastery at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The arms of the See are also emblazoned, and those of Edward the Confessor who was crowned in the Old Minster. Of heraldic glass of a later date there are several excellent examples. The visit of King James I in the year 1621 is commemorated by an elaborate representation of the royal arms. Another royal coat of arms recalls the visit of Charles I with his Queen, Henrietta Maria, the letters "C.M." standing for "Carolus, Maria," as in the roof of the choir of the Cathedral. The arms of Dean Clarke[1] who built the gallery, will be seen in the perpendicular south window which also contains some interesting foreign glass of the seventeenth century, and the arms of Dean Rennell[2] who introduced most of the panelled woodwork in the south transept of the Cathedral at the beginning of the last century.

[1] Argent, on a fess between these crosses patée, sable, three plates. Dr. Clarke's arms may also be seen on one of the columns which support the gallery.

[2] Azure, on a cross moline or a roundel gules.

Thus the Deanery is a home of many memories. We are carried back in thought to monastic days when the Prior's quarters occupied the site. The fine thirteenth-century entrance reminds us of the pilgrims and wayfarers who in the days of Henry III flocked to Winchester. The Prior's Hall, restored in the fifteenth century, conjures up scenes of entertainment and hospitality, and of religious observances as when on St. Aethelwold's Day the relics of the great prelate were passed round for the veneration of the faithful. The "Audite-house," above the thirteenth-century arcade, recalls the days of Queen Elizabeth when, the Norman Chapter-house having been destroyed, a chamber was needed for the transaction of Chapter business. The Long Gallery, facing the sunshine, speaks of the period of the Restoration, when, after the grim days of the Commonwealth, the gay monarch held his court in the stately room. Since then but few alterations have taken place, and the Deanery remains—with its striking archaeological features ranging over a period of six hundred years; with its many historical associations; with its memories of saintly priors like Henry Woodlock and

Thomas Silkstede, and of distinguished Deans like George Abbot afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, and George William Kitchin afterwards Dean of Durham—one of the most interesting and noble houses in the land associated with the piety of former generations.

CHAPTER VI

THE MONKS' REFECTORY

When Dr. Milner published his classical history of Winchester at the close of the eighteenth century (1798), portions of the monks' Refectory were still standing on the south side of the cloister garth. "The Refectory," he says,[1] "stands east and west, and projects beyond the south cloister to the distance of about forty feet. Two long, narrow windows, in the style of Henry the Third's reign, are still seen at the west end of the Refectory; as likewise four round-headed windows, partly blocked up, of Walkelin's work, in its north wall; against which are placed the figures of two large chestnut trees, carved in hard stone and coloured. This hall was forty-one feet long, twenty-three broad, and nearly forty at its greatest height; being now divided into two stories. At the east end, between the windows, was the celebrated crucifix, from which a human voice was reported to have proceeded, deciding the controversy between St. Dunstan and the new-established monks

[1] Vol. ii, p. 136.

on the one hand, and the ejected canons on the other. . . . At the table, on the right hand of the crucifix, was the Prior's place; on the left hand sat the sub-Prior. The monks were ranged at tables placed on each side of the refectory, according to their offices and seniority. On the north side, between two of the windows, was the reader's pulpit." The floor was covered with straw or rushes, provided by the Prior, and changed seven times in the year, "thrice in winter and four times in summer." He also provided mats for the floor, and coarse hempen cloths for the tables.

Every vestige of this ancient and interesting building has now disappeared, including "the figures of the two large chestnut trees, carved in stone and coloured." There are still preserved, however, in the Cathedral archives, several mediaeval documents closely connected with the Refectory. There is a valuable fourteenth-century manuscript entitled *Consuetudines in Refectorio*,[1] and two most interesting Diet-rolls,[2] all of which

[1] *A Consuetudinary of the Fourteenth Century*, edited by Dean Kitchin. (Elliot Stock, 1886.)

[2] *Obedientiary Rolls of St. Swithun's Priory*, pp. 306-362. See, too, "Introduction," pp. 66-68 (*Hants. Record Society*). To this volume I am almost entirely indebted for the particulars in this chapter.

have been transcribed and edited by the late Dean Kitchin, and which give us a clear and full account of the daily fare of the brethren in St. Swithun's monastery.

It appears that it was customary for the Prior to provide the Refectorian, or officer in charge of the Refectory, not only with straw and rushes for the floor; but, what was of more importance, with bread, cheese, and salt, and with beer and wine, for the whole community. This was no small charge, to meet which the revenues of certain estates were assigned to him. The monastic gardener, or hortulanus, found the Refectory in such vegetables as were then in cultivation, and also in fruit, chiefly apples, from the garden called Paradise, for the seasons of Advent and Lent. These items therefore do not appear in the Diet-rolls, which deal only with the supply of meat and fish, and of such extra dishes as were provided as "pittances" or for the use of the "ministrants" or other important officials. One of our Diet-rolls runs from Michaelmas 1492 to Whit-Sunday 1493; and the other from December, 1514, to September, 1515; and from these rolls we get a clear idea of the daily fare of the brethren in summer and

winter, on fast-day and festival. Some of the dishes appear under strange names, but these, with the aid of a glossary, it is mostly possible to interpret. Many of them were of the nature of stews and hashes, which, in days when forks were practically unknown, could be conveniently eaten with a spoon.[1]

During Lent and on the weekly fast-days the fare was meagre and unvaried. It usually consisted of "drylynge," that is, salt fish of some kind, usually cod or red herrings, or sometimes salt salmon; with a dish of stewed mushrooms, and perhaps some mussels or minnows as an entrée. So far as our rolls are concerned, no eggs were used during Lent, except on Good Friday apparently in connection with the ceremony of "foot-washing" when a large number were consumed. Both in 1493 and in 1515 the provision for Good Friday was exactly the same. It ran as follows:—

1,000 eggs (for the foot-washing),
Red herrings,
Figs as entrée.

The charge for eggs came only to 3s. 4d., which in our present money would equal

[1] See a most interesting article by Abbot Gasquet, entitled "Two Dinners at Wells in the Fifteenth Century," printed in *The Last Abbot of Glastonbury*, pp. 166-185.

about a halfpenny each. On fast-days a charge for mustard is almost invariably found. The condiment not only rendered the insipid food somewhat more palatable, but was also no doubt a help to digestion.

On high festivals, such as Easter Day, the fare was naturally of a more generous nature. Again, in both the years covered by our Rolls, the menu is practically the same,[1] and consisted of the following courses :—

Spiced vegetables,
Batir pudding,
Eggs,
Nombles as entrée,
Mortrells as pittance,
Sew for supper,
Flavons for common pittance,
Beef,
Mutton,
An entrée for the Sub-Prior,
Wine to the Prior and others.

On these great occasions the Prior dined with the brethren, who provided him and his chaplains with choice wine from the cellarer's stores, and other delicacies. "Nombles," a dainty dish of venison, it will be

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, pp. 324, 345.

observed, was also served, and "mortrells," that is, a pastie of meat and bread-crumbs prepared in a tempting manner as a pittance, A further pittance was placed on the table in the shape of "flavons," a kind of open custard or cheesecake, coloured with saffron. For supper on Easter Day the brethren had a "sew," a sort of pottage or broth, made chiefly of onions, with some other tasty ingredients. What exactly the "spiced vegetables" were, it is difficult to determine. It was clearly a course for great occasions, for it occurs in our Rolls only for Easter and for Christmas Day. The exact expression is "*In legumine afforciato*,"[1] "in seasoned or spiced vegetable"; and it probably denoted a dish of herbs dressed with "salt and sugre," and served up with "gode mylke of almaunde." Milk of almonds was in high favour among the monks, and, indeed, spices and condiments generally, Almonds, we find were brought for the monastery in large quantities and also ginger, cinnamon, pepper, mace, saffron, "galengi," and other comfits. These "spiceries," we are told, "were part of the old botanic medicines, in which spices and pepper

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 483.

and sugar were not so much articles of diet, as parts of the Pharmacy. The principal ailments of the monastic and Cathedral life were neuralgia, rheumatism, sciatica, rheumatic gout, and kindred diseases, brought about by living and serving in the great damp and unwarmed buildings in the winter time. Fasting also led to much illness; our great comforters, tea, coffee, cocoa, were unknown, and drugged and spiced wines had to take their place, when the chilled and congested liver, kidneys, and stomach refused to take the gross food of the age."[1]

With regard to the fare on an ordinary day, let us take, as an example, Monday, 21st August, 1515. For their two meals, at breakfast and supper-time the monks had :—

Moile,
Eggs,
Nombles as entrée,
Sew for Supper,
Beef and mutton,
Calves' feet for ministrants,
Entrées for Sub-Prior and Hordarian.[2]

The main dish consisted, as usual, of beef and mutton; although sometimes, doubtless

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 234, note 3.
[2] *Ibid.*, 359.

to the satisfaction of the brethren, pork was substituted. Moile was a very frequent item in the menu, and consisted of bread toasted under the roasting meat and soaked in the dripping. Nombles, as we have seen, was a choice preparation of venison. It will be noticed that an extra dish of calves' feet was provided for the ministrants. The "ministrants"[1] were the monks who were told off on the *Tabulae Missae,* or list, hung up in some conspicuous place in the convent, for special duty in the Cathedral, such as the singing of Mass at the different altars of the church. It was customary to recognise these duties by the addition of an extra course to the ministrants at meal-time. The dishes varied: sometimes a hash of calves' feet was provided; sometimes fried mussels or cockles, or perhaps oysters; and sometimes a few red herrings were set aside for supper.

The amount of fish consumed in the monastery was enormous, and the variety of it considerable. We learn from the Receiver's Roll for the year ending Michaelmas

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 203 *n.*, 307.

1335, when the number of the brethren was sixty-four, that no less than 42,000 red herrings were used, 11,300 white herrings, 222 salt salmon, while the sum paid for "salt mullet, conger, lynge, etc.," came to £36, or over £400 of our present money. In addition to this supply of salt fish which, with the many fast-days, must have become very wearisome to the brethren, other and choicer kinds are occasionally mentioned in the Rolls. In the year 1515, when St. Swithun's Festival (15th July) fell on a fast-day, the occasion was marked by the provision at considerable expense, of "fresh salmon" as an entrée both at breakfast and supper, with plaice as a pittance.[1] Sometimes the monks would have "fresh congers" or eels for supper. Shell-fish—oysters, mussels, "wyrwynckles" (periwinkles), "shrympes,"—are not infrequently mentioned as a little extra for the ministrants. Freshwater fish are met with in the Rolls now and again. Minnows were apparently a favourite dish, served up as an entrée for supper. So with lampreys, which formerly abounded in the clear chalk streams of Hampshire. In the "gurges" on the Test at Nutshallyng they

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 355.

used, we learn, to be netted in thousands, and sent up to St. Swithun's monastery.[1]

So far as can be gathered from the Rolls, cakes and puddings were but rarely served in the Refectory; although now and then, chiefly on fast-days, dried figs and raisins were allowed. "Batir"-puddings, stuffed with meat or with fish, were, however, not uncommon; and sometimes we meet with the entry, "tartes for ministrants." The word "lagana," perhaps a pancake, also occurs, and "crispa," which, doubtless, denoted a little cake or biscuit made crisp before the fire. Crisps were provided on All Saints' Day, and were no doubt welcomed as a pleasant variety in the daily fare. Tansy pudding, too, is once mentioned.

Except during the season of Lent eggs were used in the monastery in large numbers. From five to six hundred a week would be sometimes consumed even in winter, and often in summer-time as many as a thousand. They were doubtless sent in from the various monastic manor-farms, which also provided game and poultry—geese, capons, and

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 498

chickens—for the Prior's table. From the same farms, and from the downs around Winchester, came the mushrooms which on fast-days, and specially during Lent, were used at St. Swithun's in huge quantities. Often as much as 3s. 4d., or £2 of our money, is paid for mushrooms for a single day's provision. It is clear that they must have been pickled or preserved in some way, so as to come in handy during the winter season. After Lent, when eggs were again in use, they were less frequently needed.

Thus, year after year, and century after century, the task for providing for the monastic Refectory went unceasingly on. The fare, if somewhat dull and monotonous according to our modern notions, was at least ample and wholesome, and probably better than that to be found in the manor-houses and farmsteads of the neighbourhood. There was always, too, a plentiful supply of good beer and cider which was at least cheering and comforting. It must also be remembered that others, besides the monks, shared in the daily provision. A large number of dependents fed on the broken meat left over from the convent tables. From the

5—(2306)

days of good Prior Godfrey[1] in the eleventh century St. Swithun's Priory had been noted for its "grace of hospitality," and it maintained that reputation undiminished till the end.

[1] *William of Malmesbury*, Book V, p. 475.

CHAPTER VII

THE MONASTIC UNDERCROFT

In one of the Prebendal houses in the Close there may be seen a fine apartment, lately converted into a dining-room, the stone vaulting of which is supported by pillars of an Early English character, belonging probably to the first half of the thirteenth century. That the building formed part of the old Benedictine priory of St. Swithun's is of course certain, but to what portion of the monastery it belonged, and to what particular purpose it was put, has been a matter of much speculation. In an illustration of the apartment in the third edition of Dr. Milner's classical *History of Winchester*, it is called a conventual kitchen,[1] and inasmuch as the monks' Refectory is known to have been situated hard by, the conjecture has been made that the vaulted chamber was the monastic kitchen in which the daily food of the community was prepared. This supposition was considered to be strengthened by the presence in the room of two stone trussels,

[1] Vol. ii, p. 140.

curiously carved, of thirteenth-century workmanship, and used to support a dresser. It is well known that on the occasion of the second coronation of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, which took place in the Cathedral the King afterwards dined, not in the Prior's Hall, but in the monks' Refectory, and the picturesque supposition has been cherished that the royal banquet was prepared in the vaulted chamber.

Several considerations, however, militate against the theory of a monastic kitchen. In the first place there seems to have been no original fireplace or chimney in the building,[1] a circumstance which in itself would be conclusive against the hypothesis. The stone trussels moreover are obviously not a pair, and have certainly been removed from some other position. Furthermore, the windows which now light the apartment are all comparatively modern, and a careful examination of the existing walls has failed to reveal any trace of earlier openings except one which seems to have been a doorway.

This latter circumstance has led others to

[1] See "Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute," *Winchester*, 1845, p. 6.

the opinion that the vaulted chamber was originally a cellar, used in monastic days for the storage of beer, wine, cider, mead, and other provisions, under the special care of the cellarer. This theory is strengthened by the fact that the level of the floor is some three or four feet below that of the ground outside.

There is yet another suggestion. It seems to be probable that the monastic infirmary was situated in this part of the Priory buildings. The room for the sick and aged monks would be upstairs, and underneath it would range, as was customary, and as may still be seen at the Hospital of St. Cross, an open portico or ambulatory where in wet or close weather the infirm brethren could take a little air and exercise without going into the cloister-garth. It has been suggested that what is now a vaulted chamber was originally the open ambulatory below the monks' infirmary, and that some time after the Dissolution the portico was walled in, and later on converted into a kitchen. The question is one which cannot now be definitely decided; but whether the vaulted building was originally a monastic kitchen, or the cellarer's store, or an ambulatory beneath

the infirmary, it remains an undoubted and imposing relic of the thirteenth century, and one of the most interesting fragments yet remaining of the once flourishing Priory.

After the time of the Dissolution, when the monastic buildings were either destroyed or converted into Prebendal residences, various alterations were carried out in this part of the convent. The apartment above the vaulted undercroft was clearly a stately one, as is shown by a large Gothic window, the outline of which can still be traced. In this room, according to tradition, the body of Bishop Gardiner lay in state, on its arrival at Winchester from Southwark, before it was finally deposited in his chantry on the north side of the high altar in the Cathedral. Some twenty-five years after this event, one, Abraham Browne, S.T.B., was installed a Prebendary, when he appears to have had allotted to him as his residence the house with the groined undercroft. During his time—he was Prebendary from 1581 to his death in 1626—the house seems to have been entirely recast. The great Gothic window was filled in with masonry, and also a rose window in the high-pitched gable, and a new window of six lights with stone

mullions inserted. The room which this window lighted was panelled with oak, where, on the finely carved over-mantel, the Prebendary's coat of arms may be seen. The initial of his surname, a big "B," may also be noticed carved in stone on a cartouche outside the new window. In this window are inserted some interesting specimens of early heraldic glass. Among them are the arms of William of Wykeham, of Cardinal Beaufort, of Bishop Langton and of Bishop Fox. There is also the coat of arms of the White family of Southwick.[1] At the time of the Dissolution of the monasteries, the Priory of Southwick was assigned to one John White, the mean and fawning servant of Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton and Lord Chancellor of England who possessed himself of vast estates belonging to the church. John White, "first owner of ye priory and manor of Southwick, after ye surrender and departyng of ye chanons from ye same," lies buried in Southwick Church, in an appropriated tomb, where his coat of arms may be seen, and the date of his death, 1567. One Thomas White, LL.D., who was also

[1] Azure, on a cross quarterly or and ermine, between four falcons close, arg. belled of the second, a fret between as many lozenges gules.

Archdeacon of Berks and Chancellor of Sarum, was installed a Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral on 21st July, 1554, which preferment he held till the year 1574, when he resigned. Thomas was probably a brother of John White of Southwick, and it is doubtless in consequence of his association as Prebendary with the residence, that the White arms came to be inserted in the window. In the following century another member of the same family, Robert White, became steward of St. Cross Hospital, in the grand church of which foundation a mural tablet to his memory may be seen with the family arms and the date of his death, 12th March, 1557.

Among the Prebendaries who have since occupied the residence above the thirteenth-century undercroft is one whose close intimacy with Gilbert White of Selborne gives him more than a passing interest. This was John Mulso,[1] who was installed in the year 1770, and who died in September, 1791. He was also Rector of Meonstoke with Soberton in Hampshire, and he divided his time between his parishes on the banks of the Meon

[1] Wavell's *History*, vol. i, p. 80.

and his residence at Winchester. Mulso was a typical eighteenth-century dignitary; the nephew of Bishop Thomas of Winchester to whom he owed his valuable preferments; a divine of considerable intellectual gifts, but whose ecclesiastical interests were mainly associated with vacant benefices. Still, he was a true and life-long friend of Gilbert White, and his letters, published a few years ago, add considerably to our knowledge of the great naturalist's career. The allusions to the famous *History of Selborne*, published in 1788, are of distinct interest. Mulso at once recognised that the volume would immortalise his friend. "Your book," he writes to White, "was mentioned with Respect by our Chapter (a full one), and the volume ordered to be bought for the Library." Again, "Mr. Lowth and Dr. Sturgess (both able men) admire your book, particularly the Natural History." And once more, "Your Book is everywhere spoken of with the highest Praises. Among others, Dr. Warton is excessively pleased with it." The copy "ordered to be bought" by the Dean and Chapter—a first edition of the immortal work—is still in the Cathedral Library, a valued and cherished possession.

Gilbert White often visited his friend at Meonstoke, and doubtless also in the Close at Winchester. White was almost as keen an antiquary as he was a naturalist, and we may think of him as deeply interested in Mulso's mediaeval residence. On a table in the panelled parlour lay, we may be sure, a copy of *The History of Selborne,* for had not Mulso written to "Brother Benjamin to secure him a first Impression of the Book"? But perhaps more interesting to White would be the heraldic glass in the mullioned windows, and the dark oak panelling with the arms of Prebendary Browne carved over the fireplace. The vaulted chamber, too, below, used in Mulso's time as a kitchen, with its elegant Early English pillars, and carved stone trussels, would appeal to his archaeological instincts and sympathies. We should like to know what he thought about it. Had he any theory, we wonder, as to its original purpose and intent. Did he discuss the matter with John Mulso; or was it a question, as we secretly suspect, on which the easy-going, comfort-loving Prebendary took but little interest? At any rate there are no allusions to the subject in Mulso's published letters; but the thought that Gilbert

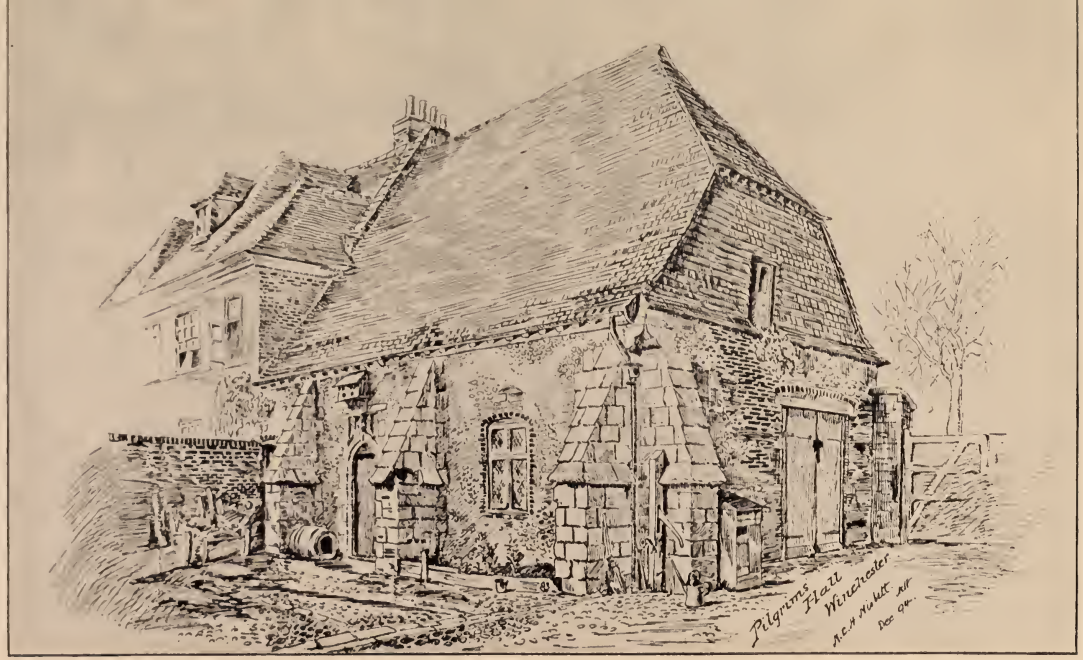
White must have visited his friend at Winchester adds an additional interest to the house in the Cathedral Close already distinguished by the thirteenth-century undercroft.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GUEST-HOUSE OR PILGRIMS' HALL

ONE of the most interesting relics of monastic days is the guest-house or strangers'-hall. Adjoining, and partly incorporated in, one of the Canon's houses, it stands in the south-east portion of the enclosure, known as Mirabel Close. The building dates back to the close of the thirteenth century, or it may be the early years of the fourteenth century, when it was built by the monks of St. Swithun's convent for the accommodation of the poorer pilgrims and wayfarers who sought shelter at the monastery. The fine timber roof,[1] with its massive hammer-beams and rafters of stout oak, showing clear traces of the smoke which curled up from the fire on the hearth placed in the centre of the hall, remains in as sound a condition as when it was originally put up. At the end of several of the hammer-beams carved heads may be seen, though the features have

[1] An interesting account of the roof, by Mr. N. C. H. Nisbett, is published among the *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club*, vol. iii, pp. 71-77.



THE GUEST-HOUSE, OR PILGRIMS' HALL, *facing east*

(From a drawing by N. C. H. Nisbett, A.R.I.B.A.)

naturally become somewhat indistinct in the course of centuries. One represents a crowned head, another shows the long hair as worn in the time of the Edwards, a third the face of a monk wearing a cowl. The hall originally was of five "bays," and measured about seventy feet in length by thirty feet wide; but after the time of the Reformation half of it was utilised as a prebendal residence, in the attics of which the massive roof timbers may be seen. The other part, now used as a stable, preserves to a great extent the original features of the building. The windows, it is true, are of a more modern date, but the doorways stand in their old position, and the buttresses on the eastern side remain. In this hall the poorer pilgrims, as Dean Kitchin said, "with such rough food as charity or the convent kitchen provided, rested, and slept after the weary journey along the line of one or another of the Roman roads which converge at Winchester. Hence they came forth to worship at St. Swithun's shrine, and, it may be, in hopes of cure to spend a night of vigil in the silent church; finally, they betook themselves to the beautiful arcade of groined work attached to the Prior's

Refectory, and there met by the servants from his kitchen, who distributed to them broken victuals from my Lord's table."[1]

The free and ungrudging hospitality exercised by the monasteries in mediaeval times is hardly perhaps fully recognised. In the convents hospitality, like the maintenance of roads and the repairing of bridges, was regarded as a religious duty. In days when inns were few and accommodation indifferent, guests were constantly arriving at the monastic gates. Princes and nobles and other great personages would be entertained in the Prior's Refectory with becoming state and dignity. This lavish hospitality often proved a serious strain on the resources of a monastery, and seems to have been not infrequently abused. Indeed it was found necessary in the reign of Edward I, and again in that of his successor, to forbid by statute anyone to lodge in a religious house without the formal invitation of the Prior, unless he were a benefactor of the establishment, and even then his demands were to be strictly moderate. The poor alone were to be lodged gratuitously, " the King intending not that the grace of hospitality should

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 11.

be withdrawn from the desolate."[1] And poor folk, pilgrims, wandering minstrels, "popet pleyers," simple wayfarers, seem to have been constantly on the road. Hence the larger monastic establishments possessed guest-houses or "guesten-halls," where such poorer travellers could suitably be entertained. At Battle, the guest-house outside the Abbey gates, still remains, a beautiful example of fifteenth-century half-timber work. Our hall at Winchester, of yet more ancient date, testifies to the same "grace of hospitality." And from very early times St. Swithun's monastery had a good name for entertaining strangers. William of Malmesbury, who wrote during the first half of the twelfth century, tells us how good Prior Godfrey, who ruled the monastery from 1082 to 1107, "strongly impressed on the monks the laws of hospitality, who," he adds, "to this day so closely follow the footsteps of the Prior that they deserve all possible commendation; indeed, in this house there is a place of entertainment to any extent for travellers of every sort by sea or land with boundless expense and ceaseless attention."[2]

[1] Statute, 3. Edward I, cap. 1, quoted by J. J. Jusserand in *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 121.

[2] Bohn's edition, p. 475. See, too, *Milner*, ii, p. 140.

And in those early days a goodly number of pilgrims visited the shrine of St. Swithun. It shared with the chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury, with the shrines of St. Alban, of St. Edmund at Bury, of St. Cuthbert, and of the Venerable Bede at Durham, in the suffrages and devotion of the faithful. For some centuries St. Swithun seems to have been one of the most popular healing-saints in England. The monk Wulfstan, precentor of the Cathedral in the days of Bishop Aethelwold, gives an interesting instance of a wonderful cure which took place at the saint's shrine. "There was a poor man so sick that he was nigh unto death. His friends carried him to Winchester, and were for taking him to St. Josse; but as they drew nigh to the gate of the New Minster one met them who asked them what they did? St. Swithun's bones, he said, were far more potent in the Old Minster hard by. To this advice they harkened, and so laid the sick man under the relics of the holy Saint Swithun; and there they kept watch with him, praying and dozing, through the night. Towards daybreak they all fell off to sleep, and to the sick man in his dreams it seemed as if the shrine above him rocked

and swayed mightily, and someone was tugging at his shoes. And he awoke in fear and trembling, and lo! he was healed; but one of his shoes was gone, and though men sought diligently for it, to this day it has never been found."[1] In pre-Reformation times the silver shrine of St. Swithun was the special glory of the Cathedral. It was adorned with jewels and precious stones, the offerings of the devout. Some idea of its splendour may be gathered from the fact that when, in 1538, it was demolished by Pollard, "the silver alone" was reckoned to "amount to near two thousand marks." It was in order to accommodate the crowds of pilgrims who flocked to it, that Bishop de Lucy reconstructed the eastern part of the Cathedral. The shrine was placed in the new retro-choir, between the present chantries of William Waynflete and of Cardinal Beaufort. The pilgrims entered the church by a Norman doorway in the north transept, paid their offerings, perhaps on the spot where the carved figure of the sacristan with his chequer-board looks down from the sculptured capital, made their way up the steps

[1] Quoted by Dean Kitchin in *Winchester*, "Historic Towns" series, p. 33.

into the retro-choir, visited the sacred shrine, and returned by the same route, being stopped on the south side by those fine gates of wrought iron, still to be seen in the Cathedral though not in their original position, which are believed to be the earliest example of wrought-iron work in the kingdom. Some of the pilgrims would no doubt arrive at Winchester in a pitiable plight, the result of exposure on the road, or the victims, it may be, of one of those dread diseases which, in days when all rules of sanitary science were unknown, were so common in England. To meet such cases the Hospital of St. John had been founded by St. Brinstan in the tenth century, and some rolls of the foundation still in existence show how faithfully the intentions of the bishop were fulfilled.

To look after the needs and comfort of the visitors a special official, known as the "hostiarius" or guest-master existed in the larger monasteries. Among his duties, as we learn from the Constitution of Archbishop Lanfranc, were those connected with the guest-house or strangers'-hall. He was to see that everything was in due order for the comfort of the poorer travellers. He was specially to look to the "seats, tables,

towels, table-cloths, cups, patens, spoons, basins, etc., wood also for the hearth, bread and drink and other food."[1] Unfortunately, among the Obedientiary Rolls of St. Swithun's Convent, still preserved in the Cathedral library, we possess no roll of the hostiarius or guest-master. His duties, however, would be the same at St. Swithun's as in other Benedictine houses; and we may think of him as busily engaged, after the good traditions of the convent, in caring, not only for the more important guests who would dine in the Prior's Refectory, but also for the poor and destitute who would congregate in the strangers'-hall. Here in winter-time they would gather round the blazing logs which burnt brightly on the open hearth; here they would drink their ale, and take their fill of rough but wholesome food; here they would rest for the night in quiet contentment, and rising with the morning star would go on their way rejoicing.

Up to the time of the Reformation the guest-house in Mirabel Close had been the scene of constant hospitality. For the space of some two hundred and fifty years it had

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 30.

sheltered thousands of homeless travellers on their visits to Winchester. But at the dissolution of the monastery this condition of things was abruptly broken. The faces of crowned monarch and hospitable monk, carved on the massive oak hammer-beams, no longer looked down upon a motley assembly of pious pilgrims, wandering minstrels, and other wayfarers, gathered round the central hearth, or resting on rough pallets against the wall. Silence and desolation now reigned within the hall, the shelter no longer of strangers and pilgrims upon the earth, but only of owls and jackdaws who laid their eggs and reared their young in the dark corners and recesses of the timber roof. The building doubtless became an outhouse or lumber-shed where any rubbish could be conveniently thrown. At the time of the Commonwealth, when great havoc was wrought in the Close, it seems to have escaped the attention of the Parliamentary Commissioners, although many of the Canons' houses were reduced to a state bordering on ruin.

After the Restoration, just before Bishop Morley died he appointed Dr. John Nicholas, Warden of Winchester College, to a canonry in the Cathedral, and the new Prebendary

Photo by *H. Joel*

THE GUEST-HOUSE OR PILGRIMS' HALL, *facing west*
(Showing part of Dr. Nicholas' House, No. 3, built into it)

was duly installed on 2nd April, 1684. The house assigned to him, perhaps from its proximity to College, was the one adjoining the guest-house, and now known as No. 3. It was in a grievous condition of dilapidation. But the new Prebendary was not only the possessor of considerable wealth, he was also a man of fine generosity. No sooner had he completed, in June 1687, the building of the new schoolroom at a cost of £2,600, of which sum he himself contributed no less than £1,477,[1] than he set to work, it would seem, on his prebendal house. The date 1687 still to be seen on the lead guttering marks the year of the rebuilding or restoration. He apparently employed the same architect, supposed to have been Sir Christopher Wren, or some at least of the same workmen, who had been engaged at College. For in his residence we meet with the same style of artistic decoration as may be seen in "School." The ceiling at the top of the central oak staircase has its cornice enriched with unusual and elaborate plasterwork, which bears, among other designs, the coat of arms of Dr. Nicholas impaled with those of his wife, and th. arms of the diocese of

[1] *Kirby's Annals of Winchester College*, p. 368.

Winchester. Dr. Nicholas, moreover, wainscotted with wide panels of oak the walls of several of his apartments, including the one now used as a library, and which occupies the spot from whence in mediaeval times the smoke of burning logs ascended to the roof of the pilgrims' hall.

Dr. John Nicholas passed away, at the age of 74, on 27th February, 1711, doubtless in his prebendal house in Mirabel Close, beneath the actual roof-beams of the mediaeval guest-house. He was buried in Prior Silkstede's chapel in Winchester Cathedral, where a typical eighteenth-century monument of vast size celebrates his benefactions. It consists of a flaming urn, under a Doric arch, ornamented with sepulchral lamps, grinning skulls, and family arms. More interesting, however, as a memorial of the Warden and Prebendary, is the fine plaster cornice of the ceiling which overhangs the dark oak staircase of his residence in the Close. His coat of arms[1] in painted glass may also be seen over the doorway which leads into the garden, from whence, through an opening in the Close walls made for the

[1] Argent, a fess wavy sable, between three Cornish Choughs proper.

express convenience of Dr. Nicholas, direct approach could be obtained to the Warden's lodging beyond. His panelled apartment, where I sit writing these words, is a spot of sacred memories. It occupies, as we have seen, part of the actual space once included within the guest-house. For two centuries and a half it was dedicated to the grace of hospitality. The poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind here sat down to supper. Many angels were doubtless entertained unawares. The room is haunted, not with dread memories of ghastly deeds, but with gracious influences of homely benevolence. The figure of the friendly and pious *hostiarius* is gone; but the echo of the Master's voice still seems to linger among the beams and rafters of the strangers' hall: "I was hungry and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in."

CHAPTER IX

THE PRIORY STABLES

THERE will be seen, adjoining Cheyney Court, a long picturesque building formerly used as a range of stables. The building, with its fine timber framework filled in with brick and covered with red tiles, probably dates, at least in its present appearance, from the time of the Restoration, when so many of the Close dwelling-houses were erected or enlarged. But it occupies the site of the old Priory stables, even if we do not venture, with some distinguished authorities, to claim the building as an actual relic of monastic days.

Standing within the ancient enclosure, and presenting an appearance of mediaeval antiquity, the range of stables conjures up many memories of the olden times when a Benedictine Priory lay sheltered beneath the Cathedral walls, and the manifold activities of life associated with a great monastic establishment went quietly and steadily on. The Prior of the monastery was naturally a personage of much importance and dignity.

Photo by *H. Joel*

THE CONVENT STABLES

He had, of course, his own special duties, as head of a religious community, to occupy his time and energies. There were the church services to attend, and the daily chapter-meeting to preside over. The general management of the convent was under his supervision and control. Questions of discipline and of administration had to be considered. Guests, too, must be received, and entertained with becoming hospitality. In addition to these home duties, there were the convent estates to be visited, and many public and social functions which demanded his presence. And when the Prior went abroad he did so with considerable state and circumstance, as became the great feudal lord that he was. He had his own esquires and attendants, who wore the Prior's livery after the manner of other landed gentry. His palfry was richly caparisoned, and he would sometimes ride with a falcon on his wrist, for he was not above enjoying a little wholesome recreation in the pleasures of the chase.

The Priory stables, therefore, were not an unimportant part of the establishment; and the brethren's visits to the various manor-houses belonging to the convent, for business or relaxation, were no doubt regarded as

delightful breaks in the somewhat monotonous routine of religious duties. Our monastic rolls contain many allusions to these secular but most necessary duties that fell to the lot of "my Lord Prior" and other of the brethren, and throw a pleasant light on the more human conditions of life in St. Swithun's Priory in mediaeval times.

At Wootton, near Basingstoke, the convent owned a large estate, and the Prior was not infrequently there, staying sometimes at the manor-house and sometimes at Manydown manor-house about a mile distant. To the Wootton manor-house there was a fine garden attached, and also a park, which in the year 1377 was fenced in so as to keep the wild animals, perhaps red deer, from straying out of it. We learn from the rolls, published in the Hampshire Record Society series,[1] many interesting little details with regard to the management of the estate. There is haymaking to be done, timber to be felled in the extensive woods, and tenants to be looked after. Now a gate leading into the "gardinum de Wottone," which was set round with a thick hedge, needs mending, and now the chapel windows call for attention.

[1] *The Manor of Manydown*, edited by Dean Kitchin.

In the year 1368 a good deal of work has has to be done on the farm buildings, and the Prior, Hugh de Basyng, stays at the manor for five days to give the necessary instructions. The wide stretches of woodland were not the least valuable part of the estate in days when timber was more extensively used for building than at present. When, for instance, William of Wykeham was busy reconstructing the nave of his Cathedral church the convent supplied the timber from the Manydown Woods. Later on, in 1459, three magnificent oaks, felled at Manydown, were sent to Winchester for the roof of the Prior's hall, where they may still be seen in a state of perfect preservation.

And while there was business to attend to, a little sport could be innocently enjoyed in the woods and coppices. Now and again there are entries with reference to the Prior's huntsmen.[1] Brother William Skyllyng, who was Receiver of the monastery for some years, loved to see the hounds run, and he would sometimes spend a few days at Manydown manor-house. The Prior himself was not above these natural inclinations. In the year 1311 Prior Richard de Enedford, with

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 63. *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 34.

his white mare and roan palfrey, is on his way to Marlborough to enjoy some hunting in the forest glades of Savernake. Later on there is an entry which shows that the good Prior was taking a little wholesome recreation in the Park of Freemantle. At Crondal, too, in the north of the county, the convent held property, and there, in the same year, a serving-man in charge of seven hares is awaiting the Prior's arrival for a day's coursing on the open flats of Aldershot. Dean Kitchin came across an entry of exceptional interest to the effect that on one occasion the convent built for the Prior "a new house for his dogs within the precincts" of the monastery. Unfortunate accidents sometimes occurred then, as now, in the pursuit of sport. In the year 1337, when hunting in Hempage Wood, some six miles from Winchester, "the famous scene of Bishop Walkelin's energy" in cutting down the king's forest for the cathedral roof, the nephew of one John de Torschaghe was killed. It was owing, perhaps, to some carelessness on the part of the Prior's people; at any rate, the convent paid to the relatives the sum of twenty shillings and eightpence as "hush

money" or compensation.[1] Hunting accidents seem, indeed, to have been not uncommon. The William Rufus episode was no isolated instance. In Winchester Cathedral may be seen the tomb, not only of the Red King, but also of another son of the Conqueror—Richard, Duke of Beorn, slain, like his brother, by an arrow in the New Forest.

Besides the red deer which roamed in the parks at Wootton and Waltham, and in the unenclosed forests of the district, other kinds of game found their way to the Priory of St. Swithun's. Hares were doubtless more plentiful in the Middle Ages than they are to-day. Conies, or *Coniculi* as the rolls call them, made a pleasant change in the diet of the brethren, and sometimes new nets are wanted for the gamekeepers, or a new pair of gloves. The Priors possessed extensive rabbit warrens on some of their estates, which formed a little source of revenue. Partridges, too, abounded in the open country, and were taken, as we learn incidentally from the rolls, in nets, after the manner of poachers in modern times. In the year 1337 one of the brethren, John le Coucherier by

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 275.

name, was frequently away from Winchester, *in patria*, "in country parts," catching partridges,[1] no doubt for the table of the Prior, Alexander Heriard, who then ruled the convent.

But if good sport was to be obtained on the manor-farms, the vermin must be carefully looked after. The hawks and buzzards, in days when falconry was a royal sport, were left severely alone, and were doubtless common enough in the great Hampshire forests. The red kite or glead bred every season, we may be sure, in Hempage Wood and at Manydown, and the hen-harrier had its nest year after year on the Crondal moors. We read nothing in the rolls of payments for "sparrow heads" such as disgrace the churchwardens' accounts of the eighteenth century: doubtless the large hawks kept the number of smaller birds within reasonable proportions. But in those days foxes were regarded as vermin of the most villainous type, and on some of the manors foxes were plentiful. In the Receiver's roll for the year 1337 the convent is shown to have expended the large sum of 22s. 6d. on buying nets to catch foxes, as well as rabbits and

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 250.

partridges. Another entry in the same roll brings vividly before us how the ways of country life go on unchanged from generation to generation. There is a payment of twelve pence to the *talpanarius* or mole-catcher. Perhaps the little creatures had invaded the garden of one of the manor-houses, or even of the Priory, where their presence was unwelcome in the well-kept beds of pot-herbs or flowers, and the skill of the mole-catcher was called in to get rid of them.

In addition to the pheasants and partridges brought in from the country for the use of the Prior's refectory, it was customary for the manors to provide a number of pigeons yearly for the use of the monastery. Nearly every manor had its *columbare*, its dove-cote or pigeon-house, where a vast number of birds were reared. There are many references to these dove-cotes in the rolls. Even where the interesting buildings have disappeared, it is often possible to mark their locality by field-names on ancient tithe-maps. Thus "Culver Croft," in the parish of Selborne, recalls the site of the pigeon-house once the property of Selborne Priory. In a few instances the mediaeval

dove-cotes are still standing. In my old parish of Droxford there may be seen at St. Clair's Farm, on the banks of the river Meon, a fine pigeon-house built of blocks of chalk, capable of accommodating a large number of birds.

Another interesting possession was the Prior's swannery, probably situated somewhere on the river Itchen, above or below Winchester, to which allusion is made now and again in the monastic rolls. In the year 1485, when Thomas Hunton was Prior, one John Couper was swanherd, and due payment is made to him for nesting the Prior's swans, and later on for carrying home the Prior's cygnets.[1] Ten or twelve years later, when Thomas Silkstede had succeeded to the office of Prior, the post of swanherd is held by Thomas Marinor, who receives payment for similar duties.[2] In mediaeval times the swan was a bird royal in which no subject could have property when at large in a river or creek, except by grant of the Crown. In creating this privilege the Crown granted a "swan-mark," or "game" of swans. Thus the Abbot of Abbotsbury in

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 385.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 388.

Dorset, where one of the largest swanneries in England still exists, had a "game" of swans in the estuary formed by the Isle of Portland and the Chesil bank. The monastery of Worcester held a like privilege. Prior Moore, in his Autobiography written in the early part of the sixteenth century, likes to notice the doings of his swans. We read, for instance, "Upon Seynt Dunstan's daye the swannes at Batnal browt forth fower synetts in to ye poole."[1] The Prior of St. Swithun's also possessed the privilege of keeping swans, and it would be interesting if we knew the swan-mark of the Priory. But there seems to be no allusion in the rolls to the marking of the cygnets, an important function usually carried out in the presence of the king's swanherd or his deputy. When important guests were entertained at the monastery, a swan from the convent swannery was, we may be sure, served up at the Prior's table. In mediaeval times the bird was accounted a great delicacy, and when in season no feast was considered complete without one.

The sport of falconry was much in favour

[1] *The Monastery and Cathedral of Worcester*, by J. Noake. p. 153.

in ancient days, and the right or liberty to hawk was often inserted in monastic leases. The wide, open country, almost entirely unenclosed, afforded excellent opportunities for the pastime, which was no doubt sometimes enjoyed by the brethren of St. Swithun's. The Prior's falcons may have been kept at the convent stables, or in the "mews" hard by; and once in the rolls we come across the interesting entry of new bells for the falcons. These noble birds were doubtless of much interest to the brethren, who in hours of relaxation would stroll round to the "mews" and have a look at the peregrine or goshawk of "my Lord Prior." For the good monks in this respect were men of like passions with ourselves, and were not above deriving pleasure from association with birds and animals. In a "Consuetudinary" of St. Swithun's, written in the fourteenth century on two skins of fine white parchment, dealing with the duties of the different officers of the convent, there is a most interesting passage which throws a little light on the daily life of the brethren. We learn among the duties of the cellarer, who was to be "a discreet man, giving to all their meat and drink in due season," that he was

also entrusted with feeding and looking after "the animals acquired from time to time by the brethren."[1] These were probably strange pets—apes, or bears, or peacocks—picked up, perhaps, as Dean Kitchin suggested, at St. Giles's Fair, at which, we learn, a toll of fourpence was levied on every falcon, ferret, ape, or bear which was sold there. Another illustration of the brethren's love of Nature may be seen in the exquisite wood-carving which adorns the Cathedral. In the woodwork of the choir, and of the Ladye Chapel, representations will be found of animals and birds which reveal the observation and delight of mediaeval artists in the world of Nature. A fine carving of a falconer with a noble hawk resting on his gloved wrist calls for special notice. It is very pleasant to think of the good brethren of St. Swithun's monastery, careful in the performance of their religious duties, and at the same time feeling an interest in the simple and more human round of daily life, the condition of the crops, the welfare of the stock at the manor-farms, the horses in the Prior's stables, the nesting of the swans on the

[1] *A Consuetudinary of the Fourteenth Century*, pp. 12, 22.

river Itchen, the "rearing of Ye Prior's goshawke," the destruction of vermin especially foxes on the Priory manors, the netting of a few partridges and conies on the uplands and warrens, and, above all, the care of their own pet creatures in the convent stables.

CHAPTER X

THE LOCKBOURNE

Among other mementos of monastic days still existing within the Close must be reckoned the swift stream of clear water which flows through the precincts, and also the underground watercourses which formerly drained the Priory buildings. These waterways are of considerable antiquarian interest, not only on account of their origin, but because of certain disputes which arose with regard to them, and which, strange as it may seem, exercised a marked influence on the fabric of the Cathedral church.

The Lockbourne[1] (a corruption of the mediaeval Lortebourne), as the waterways are now called, dates back to the days of St. Aethelwold in the tenth century. This famous prelate was a man of many parts, and the chroniclers love to dwell on the wonderful manner in which he improved the water-supply of Winchester. Before his time the river Itchen flowed in a single stream on the eastern side of the city

[1] See Plan of Close.

beneath the celebrated stone bridge built by St. Swithun a hundred years before. Aethelwold, we are told, diverted the course of the river a little above Abbots Worthy into various channels, and thus distributed the water, at much labour and expense, throughout the greater part of the city. He was naturally not unmindful of the needs of the monastery, which he had partly, if not entirely, rebuilt, and which lay sheltered beneath the shadow of his new Cathedral, within the lofty stone walls raised by St. Swithun against the incursions of the Danes. The monk Wolstan, in his poetical "Life of St. Aethelwold," waxes eloquent over the manner in which the Bishop brought within the precincts of the monastery, "sweet floods of water abounding with fish." Moreover, he tells us, "the runnings-off of the pond penetrate all the recesses of the buildings, and gently murmuring cleanse the whole coenobium."[1] These lines written in turgid mediaeval Latin, refer to the little trout-stream which still runs from the Abbey Mill through the Cathedral precincts, and to the "underground river, which entering the

[1] Quoted by Prof. Willis, in *Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute*, Winchester, 1845, pp. 11-14.

Cathedral precincts to the north-east of the Ladye Chapel, passed under, and acted as scavenger to most of the Conventual buildings. It was divided into two streams just to the east of the Chapter-house: of these the one went directly under the Chapter-house itself, where it received the water from the monks' lavatory; thence it scoured the Refectory kitchen, and so found its way under the group of buildings which stood at the south-west corner of the Cloisters to the river Itchen. The other branch of it went under the monks' parlour and offices; thence under the Prior's outbuildings, and so on to the river."[1]

An early and most interesting allusion to the stream of water introduced by St. Aethelwold within the precincts of the Close occurs in the story of his successor, St. Aelfege, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury and who was martyred by the Danes at Greenwich. St. Aelfege was a prelate of fearless character and of deep spirituality. The monastic chroniclers, Osberne and William of Malmesbury, tell us that his austerities were so severe that his body was reduced almost to a skeleton. His

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 249, note 4.

hands, we learn, were so thin and transparent, that when he elevated the Host the light seemed to stream through them. When as Bishop of Winchester, he resided at Wolvesey, he was wont, we are told, to come forth at midnight and, "slipping past the guards" through a little postern gate, to enter the priory stream, and there standing all night up to his middle in the water, to chant the divine praises.[1]

It is not difficult to realise that in the course of time the underground watercourses which flushed the offices of the monastery, and which found an outlet on the south side of the Close, should have become insanitary. We find from the roll of Nicholas de Haywode,[2] Receiver of the Priory, that in the year 1337 the Lortebourne had been cleaned out at a heavy expense to the monastery. Fifty years later a similar entry shows that the sewers were again choked with refuse, and were very foul and offensive. Indeed, matters became so bad that in 1398 an indenture[3] was drawn up between William of Wykeham and Thomas Nevyle

[1] Kitchin's *Winchester*, p. 37.
[2] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 249.
[3] *Wykeham's Register*, ed. by T. F. Kirby, M.A., vol. ii, pp. 508-515.

the Prior, in which the convent undertook to fix an iron grating across the south exit of the Lortebourne to prevent the refuse from passing out of the Priory precincts and so contaminating the river below. The convent further agreed to halve with the Bishop the expense of keeping in repair the wooden bridge over the stream in College Street just outside the Priory walls. The agreement settled a long-standing dispute between the monks and their Bishop, which for a considerable time had delayed the work of transforming the Norman Cathedral of Walkelin into a perpendicular building. It was therefore due to the Lockbourne, as Dean Kitchin pointed out, "that the noble Norman work of the two transepts remain undisturbed to this day; for William of Wykeham had to start so late in life that as he just begun to touch them he died. In another year they would have been completely transformed."[1]

At the time of the Reformation we find from the "Boke of Portyons,"[2] dated 28th April, 1541, that among the officials of the

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 250 *n*.

[2] Printed in "Winchester Cathedral Documents," (*Hants Record Society*), vol. i, p. 58.

newly-constituted Dean and Chapter was the "keeper of the Conduyte hedd." The conduit-head was situated about one mile up the valley of the Itchen, from whence the water was conveyed, partly in an open channel and partly in leaden pipes, into the Close. Further details are discovered from a survey of the property of the Dean and Chapter made by the agents of the Parliament at the time of the Commonwealth a hundred years later. "The water that serves the said Close," we read, "hath its beginnings from the main river a little above Abbots Worthy, and conveyes itselfe to a little Howse in a small Channell, which Howse with halfe an acre of ground both belong to the said Deane and Chapter, and hath beene and is allowed to the keeper or clenser of the same. From the said Conduit head the water is conveyed on stone to the Water lane in the Soake of Winton as farr as one Clarks Howse, and from thence into the said Close in a great pype of Lead, which pype leades to a great Cesterne of Lead standing in the Wall of a garden of one of the late prebends, which water spreadinge itselfe into severall pypes (runninge in Lead near Twoe Hundred pearch by estimñ)

serves the Deane and prebends Howses and Leaseholdes within the said Close." [1]

From the same Parliamentary Survey we gain other interesting particulars as to the condition of the Close in the year 1649. The beautiful and balmy situation evidently took the fancy of the sequestrators. "The situation of the whole Close," they wrote, "beinge very pleasant on the South of the Citty of Winton, well walled A good and wholesome Ayre, and dry, A faire entrance, A very useful watercourse runninge through the severall Offices of the said Close." [2] The watercourse is frequently mentioned chiefly because of the leaden pipes which conveyed it to the different houses, and which, there is reason to believe, were in most cases removed and sold for the value of the lead. But though the leaden pipes were removed, the underground arched passages remain as in monastic times. Water still runs through those ancient sewers which in places are nearly five feet in height, and which contain much "Early English" masonry, and mediaeval brickwork. St. Aethelwold's trout-stream, too, which has witnessed the changes

[1] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 92.
[2] *Ibid.*, ii, p. 93.

of a thousand years—the Benedictine rule, the dissolution of the monastery, the days of the Commonwealth and of the Restoration, the long succession of priors and deans, of monks and prebendaries, of petty canons and lay-vicars, and of innumerable choir-boys—still flows through the sacred enclosure, gently murmuring, with Tennyson's "Brook,"

> "Men may come and men may go
> But I go on for ever."

CHAPTER XI

CHEYNEY COURT

JUST within the stately monastic gateway of what was once St. Swithun's Priory there stands a most picturesque building which claims the almost daily attention of artists and photographers. Indeed its steep gables, its barge-rafters, its fine timbered frontage can hardly fail to arrest the attention of the most casual visitor. And it enshrines a story of mediaeval custom as interesting as the building itself is picturesque.

We are carried back in thought to early days when in the ancient capital of the kingdom two distinct jurisdictions existed side by side.[1] There was municipal Winchester with its mayor and corporation, and there was ecclesiastical Winchester with its all-powerful bishop, who resided at Wolvesey, at its head. And these two governments were entirely independent of each other. Such an arrangement was not, indeed, unknown elsewhere, for it existed in the City of London, where the Bishop's "liberty"

[1] See Shore's *History of Hampshire*, p. 204.

included the ward of Cornhill. At Winchester, all the tenements that existed beyond the East gate, as Mr. Shore tells us, were in the Bishop's jurisdiction, and were known as "the Bishop's soke," the word "soke" taking us back to Anglo-Saxon times when *sóc* meant a liberty. It also included the Cathedral precincts, the College of St. Mary, the Hospital of St. Cross, part of the parishes of St. Faith, St. Thomas, St. Bartholomew, and of Chilcombe, and the small manor of Godbiete in the centre of the city itself. This district was under the sole jurisdiction of the Bishop, and the civil authorities had no right of interference therein. How important this privilege was may be gathered from a charter of King John, which granted all the dues on the river traffic passing through the Soke, not to the city, but to the Bishop, Godfrey Lucy, "in consideration of the canal and navigation which that enterprising prelate had made all the way from the salt water" to the town of Alresford, some nine miles up the Itchen valley from Winchester.[1]

Now the chief court of this episcopal jurisdiction was the Cheyney Court, situated as we have seen, just within the entrance

[1] Kitchin's *Winchester*, p. 169.

Photo by *H. Joel*

CHEYNEY COURT

of St. Swithun's Priory. The name is probably derived from the French word *chêne*, an oak-tree, beneath the shadow of which the sessions were originally held.[1] These sessions, in the ordinary course, were held every Thursday, when cases of debt and such-like minor delinquencies were dealt with. The Bishop was represented by his deputy, styled the "Bailiff of the Soke," an important personage who had several officers called tything-men, and a constable under him. The Bishop had also his own prison at Wolvesey, and stocks for evil-doers situated a little east of St. Swithun's bridge over the Itchen. For the Cheyney Court had a criminal as well as a civil jurisdiction; and twice every year, at Hocktide and at Michaelmas, a more important session, known as the "burghmote" was held, when twelve honest and true men residing in the Soke were to assist in the administration of justice. The Court also issued licences, and had cognizance of the weights and measures used in the district, which at certain seasons were duly inspected by the bailiff's officers.

Strange to say, this double jurisdiction was permitted to continue after the time

[1] *Victoria History of Hampshire*, vol. v, pp. 47, 48.

of the Reformation, and even down to comparatively modern days. When Queen Elizabeth granted her charter to Winchester, the rights of the Bishop as Lord of the Soke were duly safeguarded. The legal process of the Cheyney Court seems in later years to have been regarded as more speedy and less costly than that of the City tribunal, and was consequently in more favour with litigants, especially for the recovery of debts.

In the year 1835, however, under the civic changes then introduced, Cheyney Court as a legal tribunal ceased to exist, and the Bishop's Soke for all practical purposes, disappeared. Towards the end of the century the Court-house was restored and converted into a dwelling-house, where in one of the upper rooms may be seen what tradition affirms, but it would appear without foundation, to have been a whipping-post. An early drawing of Cheyney Court, made in the year 1817, shows the front of the house entirely encased in plaster. This was removed during the work of restoration by Dean Kitchin, when the fine Jacobean woodwork, which lends such distinction to the appearance of the building and which was found to be composed of old ships' timber, was

revealed. On an oaken beam which runs across the entrance-hall the date 1639 may be seen. This probably marks an earlier restoration, and it is not unlikely that the quaint gables of the Court-house and its well-cut barge-boards belong to this time.

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CHAPTER XII

OTHER RELICS OF MONASTIC DAYS

THE number of relics belonging to the monastic period brought to light in the course of preserving the Cathedral during the years 1905–1912 was not so great as might have been expected. Such discoveries as were made consisted mainly of stone coffins, uncovered in digging the foundations of the new buttresses in the Close, against the south aisle of the Cathedral, where formerly the cloisters were situated.

It was a common practice to bury in the cloisters, and at one spot three stone coffins were found, lying close together at a depth of eight feet from the surface. At another spot, towards the eastern end of the dark cloister, only two feet below the surface, an immense coffin, measuring nearly eight feet in length, was encountered. But the most interesting was found in digging the foundations of the extreme eastern buttress, beside the monastic doorway into the Cathedral unaccountably closed up during the "restorations" at the beginning of the last

century. It was of Purbeck marble and fine workmanship, and evidently contained the remains of some important personage. Its removal was necessary owing to the fact that it occupied the exact space needed for the foundation of the new buttress. The process of removal was carried out with all possible care and reverence. The coffin was first raised to the surface by means of a crane and deposited on the ground. The massive lid which possessed two iron rings embedded in the marble, was then lifted, when the coffin was found to be full of mud and water. The water having been spunged up, the skeleton was seen lying in a bed of sodden clay. In the course of transferring the bones to a wooden box, to be re-buried as nearly as the new buttress would allow to their original position, a small, round object was noticed lying by the elbow of the right arm. It was eagerly picked up, and was at once seen to be a Papal bulla or seal.[1] The experience was a thrilling one—rubbing off the wet clay, in order to see the name of the Pope engraved upon it. The name was that of Martinus V, the Pope who created our Henry Beaufort Cardinal and Apostolic

[1] The bulla is now in the Cathedral Library.

Legate in England. The bulla had originally belonged to a Papal indulgence or pardon, to which it was attached by silken threads of crocus-colour and crimson. The threads and parchment had of course long since perished, but the seal remained in as perfect a condition as when it was placed in the marble coffin at the beginning of the fifteenth century. On one side of the bulla were the usual representations of the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul; that of St. Peter with the traditional short beard, and that of St. Paul with the pointed one, with the letters S.P.E. standing for St. Peter, and S.P.A. for St. Paul; and on the reverse side of the seal the name of the reigning Pope, with the letters P.P. which signify the striking and beautiful legend PATER PATRUM, "Father of fathers." The silken threads which originally attached the parchment to the seal ran through the latter longitudinally, and the passage was clearly visible. Martinus V was elected Pope at the Council of Constance in 1417, and he died in 1431. The date of the interment was therefore determined as lying somewhere between these years or possibly a little later; but who the individual was who thus obtained a

Photo by *the Rev. G. Sampson*

LEAD BULLA OF POPE MARTINUS V

(*Found in the Purbeck Marble Coffin*)

Papal indulgence which according to the usual custom was placed with his body in the coffin, there was nothing whatever to show. He was an old man as the sutures of the skull clearly demonstrated, and one who was little of stature, for the inside of the marble coffin only measured five feet nine inches and a half in length. It was clear, too, that he was a person of some importance, for a Purbeck marble coffin of such finished handiwork,[1] the lid of which was hollowed out as well as the lower portion and with a separate receptacle for the head, would not have been provided for an ordinary individual. The thought of a Benedictine Prior at once suggested itself; but no aged prior of St. Swithun's died within the prescribed limits, and, moreover, no sacramental vessel had been buried with the body. The most probable conjecture seemed to be that the remains were those of some distinguished layman who had spent his last days in the calm retirement of the monastery.

In the same excavation there was also discovered six feet below the surface, what must probably be regarded as the most

[1] The coffin now rests in the crypt beneath the Ladye Chapel.

interesting relic of monastic times found during the process of underpinning the Cathedral. It consisted of a massive piece of Purbeck marble, which proved to be the lost top of the fine monumental slab of Bishop Audemar, half-brother to King Henry III, who died at Paris in 1260, and whose heart was buried in Winchester Cathedral. The recovered fragment bears not only the missing top of the mitre, but also two admirably carved heraldic shields. How the monument came to be mutilated is unknown; but the recovered piece of sculpture has now been restored to the bishop's monument which stands in the north-east corner of the retro-choir. It may be added that during the work of refixing the monumental slab a leaden box, supposed to contain the bishop's heart, was found in a recess of the wall immediately behind it.

One other relic of monastic days may be mentioned. During the work of underpinning the nave-aisle there was uncovered close to the Cathedral walls the skeleton of a priest. The body had been clothed in a rich vestment, fragments of which showing a profusion of gold thread still remained. There had also been placed with it the

customary funeral chalice and paten, which were found in an almost perfect condition. These relics are now in the Cathedral Library. It is interesting to call to mind that when, some years ago, the ground to the west of the Cathedral was lowered, a number of skeletons of ecclesiastics, each with the usual sacramental vessels, were brought to light.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST PRIOR

In the choir of Winchester Cathedral may be seen some carved oak panels of the period of the Reformation. They are dated 1540, and beside the royal coat of arms, the Tudor emblems of the rose and the portcullis, the arms of Stephen Gardiner Bishop of Winchester, and several medallions of a conventional design, is one panel of exceptional interest. On it is displayed a coat of arms, the cap of a Doctor of Divinity, and the letters "W. K." This panel enshrines the memory of William Kingsmill, the last Prior of the old Benedictine monastery of St. Swithun, and the "first original and modern Dean" of Winchester. As Prior he had been known as William Basynge, from the parish or chapelry of that name which had already given more than one prior to the monastery; but as Dean he was always called by his family name of Kingsmill, a family still established in the county, and bearing the same coat of arms as that displayed on the Cathedral panel.[1] The arms, which are charged with

[1] Argent crusily of cross crosslets fitchée sable, a chevron ermines between three mill-rinds of the second, a chief of the third.

THE KINGSMILL PANEL

(From a drawing by N. C. H. Nisbett, A.R.I.B.A.)

three mill-rinds, form an interesting example of a rebus or punning allusion to the bearer's surname.

The life of "W. K.," Prior and Dean, embraces therefore the momentous period of the Reformation, including the destruction of St. Swithun's shrine, the dissolution of the Benedictine monastery which had existed for nearly six hundred years since the days of St. Aethelwold in the tenth century, and the establishment by Henry VIII of a new corporation consisting of a Dean and twelve Prebendaries.

William Kingsmill, of Basing, had been brought up from boyhood in St. Swithun's Priory. He belonged to that class of English society from which the monastic houses were so largely recruited—"the devouter and younger children of our nobility and gentry who there received their education and livelihood."[1] In due time he received the Minor Orders, and in 1521, as the registers show, was admitted by Bishop Fox to the office of deacon, being ordained to the priesthood in the following year. Later on he became Hordarian to the convent, an important official whose duties were connected

[1] Gasquet's *Last Abbot of Glastonbury*, p. 74.

with the supply of food for the kitchen. One of his rolls, the account for the year 1535, is still preserved in the Cathedral Library. His early years therefore coincided with a most interesting period in the history of the Priory and Cathedral. As a boy and young man he had lived under the rule of the distinguished Prior Thomas Silkstede, who himself had once held the office of Hordarian. He had seen the final completion of the Ladye Chapel, including the painting of the curious frescoes in honour of the Blessed Virgin. He had witnessed day by day the remodelling of the choir by Bishop Fox, and the growth of the magnificent altar-screen. We can imagine the interest with which he followed the making and decoration of the new mortuary chests, in which the Bishop enshrined the bones of the Saxon and Danish Kings, and which may still be seen on the top of the choir-screens. How eagerly, too, must he have followed the building of Fox's elaborate chantry, the most splendid in the Cathedral; and how often, when it was completed, must he have watched the blind Bishop being led into it by his chaplain for daily prayer and meditation. He must have been present, too, on

5th October, 1528, when the good Bishop, having died at Wolvesey Palace that very morning, was laid to rest in the afternoon, as he had desired, in the tomb that he had himself prepared. He had also witnessed the erection of the finely carved pulpit bearing the device of Thomas Silkstede which the Prior placed in the choir, and from which, it may be, Kingsmill had preached his first sermon.

Prior Silkstede died in 1524, and was succeeded by Henry Broke, whose initials may be seen in several places on the north side of Fox's new choir-screen. In Prior Broke's time indications of the coming storm began to thicken, which before long was to sweep away the monasteries in England and to abolish the jurisdiction of the Pope. In the year after his election Tyndale's New Testament appeared. The fall of Cardinal Wolsey in 1529 paved the way for the advancement of Thomas Crumwell, who before long was made Vicar-General in all matters ecclesiastical. The divorce of Henry VIII from Catherine of Aragon was pronounced by Cranmer in 1533. In the following year the "Act of Supremacy" was passed, and at St. Swithun's, as elsewhere,

the Prior and brethren were forced to acknowledge the King as "supreme Head of the English Church." Then followed the first visitation of the monasteries, and the suppression of the smaller houses.

At this juncture, in 1535 or early in 1536, Henry Broke died, and the brethren of St. Swithun's met in the Chapter-house to elect a new Prior. Their choice fell on William Basynge, who, as Hordarian, had clearly proved himself to be a man of parts and business. Nothing, however, could now be settled without the sanction and approval of Thomas Crumwell, who was accustomed to exact large fees on occasions of ecclesiastical appointments. It appears, therefore, that Dr. Legh, the monastic visitor, one of Crumwell's most unscrupulous agents, succeeded in obtaining from William Basynge on his election as Prior of St. Swithun's a promise of £500 (equal to nearly £6,000 of our money) "under his writing obligatory," to be paid in instalments to the Vicar-General.[1]

This transaction, which at first sight looks like bribery and corruption of the most

[1] See the Abbot Gasquet's *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, p. 164.

flagrant kind, brings us face to face with the question of the visitation of the monasteries, and of the methods employed by Thomas Crumwell to enrich himself and the King. The story of "the great pillage" cannot be told here, except so far, and that very briefly, as it concerns St. Swithun's. For eight years, it will be remembered, England groaned beneath the rule of Thomas Crumwell, "the most terrible figure," as J. R. Green truly says, "in our history." "The years of his ministration," he adds, "form the one period in our history which deserves the name that men have given to the rule of Robespierre." It was the English Reign of Terror. During those years his influence was supreme—supreme with the King, in Parliament, and in Convocation. As "Vicar-General" he crushed the Church beneath his iron heel. Those who opposed his will, men like Sir Thomas More, Bishop Fisher, and the noble monks of the Charterhouse, were removed out of the way. The monastic authorities were helpless. Their only policy lay in the direction of conciliation. By liberal gifts and pensions they hoped to buy off the evil day. Immense sums of money flowed into the coffers of

Crumwell. "Archbishops, bishops, abbots and priors, nobels and commoners, colleges and cathedral chapters, all sent in their fees, and new year donations, to propitiate the favour of the great man." Crumwell's account-book[1] for January, 1639, preserved in the Record Office—to give but a single illustration—records money presents for the new year amounting to £800, or more than £9,000 of our present money. Instances, moreover, abound in Crumwell's correspondence, and in other documents, of large sums paid in connection with ecclesiastical preferment. These transactions throw light upon the incident of William Basynge's election as Prior of St. Swithun's. That so huge a sum as £500 should have been promised to Crumwell on the occasion seems incredible, but his account-books show that it was actually paid. Moreover, Dr. Legh, the monastic visitor, further obtained from the new prior a patent for an annuity of £20 to be paid to the "Vicar-General," and to be afterwards continued to his son Gregory Crumwell.[2]

William Basynge having been installed

[1] Gasquet's *English Monasteries*, p. 148.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

Prior of St. Swithun's monastery, with the approval of the Vicar-General, did not have long to wait for further developments of Crumwell's policy. In the summer of 1538 orders were issued for the demolition of every noted shrine throughout the country, and the appointed officers were to "see that both the shrine and the place where it was kept be destroyed even to the ground." The notorious Pollard was commissioned to superintend the destruction of the famous shrine of St. Swithun, to which pilgrims had flocked for centuries, and which, with a few exceptions, was one of the most magnificent in the land.

The shrine having been ruthlessly destroyed and immense sums of money transferred to the royal exchequer, the next step in the movement was the dissolution of the larger monasteries. The lesser houses had already been suppressed in 1536. The abbots and priors had no choice but to acquiesce in this fresh act of spoliation. To resist was useless; it was only to court the calamities which befel the monks of Reading, Woburn, Colchester, Glastonbury, and other places, who, refusing to make a "voluntary surrender," were turned out penniless into the

world. In conjunction, therefore, with Bishop Gardiner, a Renaissance prelate of consummate statesmanship, our Prior, William Basynge, determined to make the best terms he could with the authorities. No accusation of irregular conduct had been made against the monks of St. Swithun's, neither was there any point of Protestant doctrine involved ; the question was one of accepting or resisting the situation. Prior Basynge, "being," we are told, "severely threatened on one hand, and inveighed with fair promises on the other," chose the former alternative, and in due course the deed of surrender, which made over St. Swithun's Priory to the King, was signed. The wisdom of this step was quickly apparent, for when, on 28th March, 1541, the Letters Patent of Henry VIII, establishing, in the place of the monastery, a Dean and Chapter of Winchester, appeared, it was found that Prior Basynge was nominated, as "Willelmum Kyngesmyll, the first original and modern Dean," and places were found for most of the monastic brethren in the new establishment. The more scholarly were appointed Canons of the new foundation ; others became Petycanons, of whom there were twelve, and all, save one specially

noted as a "secular priest," seem to have belonged to the dissolved monastery.[1] Doubtless other posts, such as those of deacon, sub-deacon, master of the choristers, sub-sacrist, or, it may be, of butler, barber, cook, or under-cook, were found for the remaining brethren. The new Dean was not, moreover, unmindful of his poorer kinsfolk.[2] John Kyngesmyll became porter at the Close Gate; perhaps he had already served as Hostiarius to the Priory; another, Richard Kyngesmyll, was enrolled among the almsmen or "twelve pore old men decayed in the Kinges warres or in his service," who were to be present in church in service time, and to help to clean the nave and choir, to light and put out the candles, and to ring the bells, "so far as they can"; while another member of the family, Leonard Kyngesmyll, became one of the twelve students supported by the Dean and Chapter at the University.

A few weeks after the establishment of the Dean and Chapter as a corporation, further Letters Patent were issued, dated 1st May, 1541, granting the old monastic endowments to the new body. It appears

[1] *Winchester Cathedral Documents*, vol. i, p. 55.
[2] *Winchester Cathedral Documents*, vol. i, pp. 50, 62.

that Henry VIII, owing to the conciliatory attitude of Gardiner and Kingsmill, dealt fairly and liberally in the matter. He restored to the Dean and Chapter nearly all the manors formerly belonging to St. Swithun's Priory, and added besides other property taken from suppressed monasteries. The original document is preserved in the Cathedral Library, and is a manuscript of much interest. The Great Seal is attached to it, and the headline is illuminated with an elaborate initial letter. "Inside the H. of Henricus we have Henry VIII on his royal throne, presenting the Letters Patent to the Dean and Chapter, who are on their knees around him. Dean Kingsmill, who is receiving the book, is in full robes, as are the others, the twelve Canons; there is no difference in dress between them. Each wears a long full surplice with an amice over it, with the usual pendant tails of fur round the bottom of it, for this was the sign or note of canonical dignity; under the surplice is a scarlet robe, which shows at the hands, neck, and feet; the Chapter, moreover, all wear the tonsure. At the King's right hand Bishop Gardiner will be seen, standing or

kneeling, with crozier over his right shoulder." [1]

Thus, owing to the attitude and management of William Basynge, the revenues of the Priory were retained, and the brethren of St. Swithun's monastery settled down to their new duties as members of the Cathedral Chapter. The new Dean continued to occupy his old quarters, and the Canons to live in common, as before. But few alterations were made in the Cathedral services. St. Swithun's shrine, indeed, was destroyed, and doubtless other shrines in the great church. The dedication of the building, too, was changed to that of the Holy Trinity, and a new coat of arms, which may be seen on one of the oak panels in the choir, was granted to the Dean and Chapter. But as regards ritual and mode of worship, no change of any importance was made. The services were still sung in Latin, and the Mass was celebrated as before.

So things continued during the lifetime of Henry VIII. In the last year, however, of his reign, Archbishop Cranmer was busily employed by the King in "turning the Mass into a Communion." On the accession of

[1] *Cathedral Documents*, i, p. 67.

Edward VI Injunctions of a distinctly Protestant character were at once issued to the Deans of all Cathedral churches. The Winchester copy, which bears in two places the signature of Dean Kingsmill, besides marginal notes in his handwriting, is still preserved in the Cathedral Library, and from it we learn the nature of the regulations. Certain sequences in the Communion Office are to be discontinued, and in their place Bible-reading is enjoined. The Scriptures are to be read daily in English; sermons are to be preached, and on such occasions "owre Lady Masse, and prime and howrs" are to be omitted. The choristers are no longer to be tonsured, but their "Crownes suffered to growe"; and from henceforth "neyther the Deane, prebendaries, nor other ecclesiastical person shall were any maner of cope." With these new regulations the Dean and some at least of the Canons had doubtless little sympathy. The prohibition of the use of the cope probably included that of other vestments, for it appears that William Kingsmill put his mitre carefully away, in the hope that, in the whirligig of events, the time would again come when he should be permitted to wear it.

In this expectation he was, however, doomed to disappointment, for within a year of the issue of the Injunctions the Dean died. He was not an old man. Indeed he does not appear to have been more than fifty. It was only twenty-six years since he had been ordained to the priesthood, and but twelve years since he had been elected Prior. His handwriting on the Cathedral copy of the Injunction betrays no sign of age or weakness. His mother, who had married again and had come to live at Chilcomb, was still alive. He had, however, passed through anxious and trying times, and in view of what was yet to follow he was, it may be, *felix opportunitate mortis*. His will is fortunately preserved in the Probate Court of the Winchester Registry, and from it we learn many interesting particulars.[1]

It appears that on 19th August, 1548, the Dean, finding himself "somewhat sicke in body," sent for his chaplain, Sir John Erle, who had been a monk of St. Swithun's Priory, and requested him to transcribe his last will and testament. In deep sorrow—for the Dean had shown many kindnesses

[1] My friend, the Rev. J. F Williams, Vicar of Ashmansworth, kindly copied out the will for me.

to Sir John—the chaplain prepared his papers. It is clear from the wording of the will that Kingsmill died in the full faith of the old religion. He begins with a commendation of his soul to "Allmyghtye God," and the prayer that he may have the fruityon of His Godhead "with the most blessed Virgin Mary and all other of the holly company in heaven." He desires that his body may be buried, according to the discretion of the Chapter, either within the "Cathedrall churche of the blessed Trinitye" or in the churchyard outside. For the "Hie Altar of the saide Cathedrall churche" he leaves a sum of money, and also to every Prebendary and official present at his funeral. Nor are the poor and destitute forgotten. To "the impotente and pore people" of Winchester he leaves a donation, and also to "the pore prisoners in the gaile and Westgate."

Then follow a number of bequests of a private and personal character. To his chaplain he gives the advowson of the church of Compton a picturesque village two miles south of Winchester, his short gowne, and one of the best vestments in his chapel. The advowson of Compton belonged by

right to the Bishops of Winchester, but it appears that, with thoughtful consideration, Stephen Gardiner had given the next presentation to his friend William Kingsmill in the event, as seemed not unlikely amid the changes of the time, of the Dean needing a shelter in his old age.

To the two Cathedral sextons William Friar and Thomas Winslade, and to Roger Inkpen one of the almsmen, who witnessed his signature to the will, the Dean leaves sundry articles—a "gowne of black cloth" each, a "gret chest of the studdy," some silver spoons, and some money. Dean Kingsmill also possessed some landed property at Compton, at Henton, and at Silkstede, a hamlet about four miles from Winchester, where the monastery had formerly a manor-house, and his goods at these places—the "household stuffe," the "implements," the cattle, his gelding named Jacke, and another gelding named Button—are left to different relatives, aunts, and cousins and other kinsmen.

It is clear that at the time of the destruction of St. Swithun's shrine the Prior had secured one or two relics out of the pillage. There was, we learn from the will, the "gylt

pax of Saint Swithun with hangings of the Carnalles hat," and there was the "golde ringe of Saint Silvester," which he carefully kept in his "red velvet purse." This latter treasure he bequeaths to the Chancellor of the diocese ; and one wonders what became of it. Is it possible that the gold ring now preserved in the Cathedral Library and associated with the name of Bishop de Blois, but on what authority is unknown, is in reality "the golde ringe of Saint Silvester" bequeathed by Dean Kingsmill to "Mr. Chaunceler" ? The "gylt pax of St. Swithun" was the tablet, doubtless of silver-gilt, and bearing a representation of the Crucifixion or some other Christian symbol, which had once belonged to the great Bishop and which had been prized for many centuries by successive Priors of the monastery. It was sometimes the custom during the celebration of High Mass to expose this sacred relic for the kisses of the faithful.

After the mention of this ring, and the gilt pax of St. Swithun, the most interesting item in the will is the allusion to the Tabard, the famous monastic Inn, immortalised by Chaucer, in the Borough. Like many great ecclesiastics, Dean Kingsmill had a

lodging there, and when Convocation or other duties called him to London he would reside at the Tabard in dignity and comfort. To his married sister, Margaret Hall, who lived at Basingstoke, close by the hamlet of his birth, he left all his "goods and implements," that is to say, all his furniture, in his "loudging within the Taberett in Southwerke," including "one blewe vestment, and one redd aulter hangings."

As executors to his will the Dean appointed "Mr. John White and Alice my mother." Mr. John White was one of the Prebendaries nominated by Stephen Gardiner as Bishop of Winchester, and he was also warden of St. Mary's College, Winton, and destined to become, under Queen Mary, Bishop of Lincoln, and afterwards Bishop of Winchester. To Mr. John White the Dean bequeathed his "best skarlet gowne," and to his mother, now become Mrs. Tyderige, and residing, as we have seen, at Chilcombe on the outskirts of the city, "all the stuffe and implements which she hath at this present time within her house." As "full executors" they were finally to dispose of such goods as remained, "all detts being payde, as they shall thinke best for the health of my soule."

The exact date of Dean Kingsmill's death is unknown, but the will was duly proved by Alice Tyderige his mother on 18th October, 1548. He therefore died some time in the late summer or early autumn of that year. He was buried, as he desired, in the Cathedral, where in the nave a stone formerly marked his resting-place. The stone, as we learn from the antiquarian Samuel Gale[1] who wrote in 1715, was "near the pulpit" and close to that of Bishop Horne, and bore in his time the following inscription :—

Willemus Kingsmell prior ultimus.
Decanus primus ecclesiae . . .
Obiit 1548 . . . . . .

The stone has now unfortunately disappeared. The only memorial, therefore, which we possess of William Kingsmill is the carved oak panel in the choir, where the Doctor's cap, with his initials and the Kingsmill arms, reminds us of the good and pious man who was the last Prior of St. Swithun's Monastery and the first Dean of Winchester Cathedral.

[1] *The History and Antiquities of Winchester*, p. 37.

CHAPTER XIV

A FAMOUS PREBENDARY

Of those who have lived within the Close since the time of the Reformation, no name is more celebrated than that of Thomas Ken, the author of the Morning and Evening Hymns, for fifteen years a Prebendary of our Cathedral, and afterwards Bishop of Bath and Wells. Thomas Ken was born at Berkhampstead, in Hertfordshire, in July, 1637; and in his fourteenth year was admitted a scholar of Winchester College. His name is still to be seen cut on the stone buttress of the south-east corner of the venerable cloisters—"THO. KEN. 1656"—the year of his leaving Winchester for the University of Oxford. Of the boy's life at school between these two dates we have but scanty information. It was the age of the Puritan Revolution, and the College services were doubtless of a Presbyterian character. The Warden of Winchester was Dr. John Harris, a member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and "so noted a preacher that Sir Henry Savile (who was himself styled the

magazine of all learning) used often to say he was second only to St. Chrysostom." It may perhaps be permitted to associate the influence of his eloquence with Ken's remarkable preaching in after years. Among his school-fellows were John Nicholas elected at the same time with Ken, and in after years, like him, a Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral, and Edward Young, the father of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, who afterwards preached Ken's consecration sermon, and Francis Turner, afterwards Bishop of Ely, with whom "he contracted a closely-cemented friendship." Of Ken's conduct as a boy at College we are told that his "towardly disposition" was an example to others, and that "his parts, application, and behaviour were well employed and observed." And it is not unreasonable to suppose that he exhibited that "early piety" which in his famous *Manual*, he afterwards recommended to the scholars of Winchester.

Of Ken's career at Oxford it is beyond our province to speak. It will be sufficient to say that, with his friend John Nicholas, he was duly admitted a Fellow of New College, where, after taking his degree, he held for a time the position of college tutor. He

appears to have been ordained, probably by Bishop Skinner of Oxford, in 1661 or 1662, with his fellowship as a title ; and in 1663, after seven years' residence at the University, he accepted from Lord Maynard the rectory of Little Easton, a small country parish near Dunmow in Essex. Here he remained for two years on terms of close friendship with Lady Maynard, to whom he acted as spiritual counsellor, and carrying out his parochial duties on the lines doubtless of George Herbert's "Country Parson."

In 1665, nine years after he had carved his name on the cloisters in College beside that of Francis Turner, we find Ken again in Winchester. The immediate object of his return is somewhat obscure. But George Morley was now Bishop of the diocese, and it may be that he offered Ken the post of domestic chaplain. In the following year, however, Ken was elected Fellow of Winchester College, and in 1667 Bishop Morley presented him to the living of Brighstone in the Isle of Wight. Two years later the Bishop appointed him a Prebendary of the Cathedral, and at the same time transferred him from the Isle of Wight to the living of East Woodhay, which position, however, he

afterwards resigned in order to make room for his old Oxford friend, George Hooper of Christ Church, who was also one of Bishop Morley's chaplains. We may, therefore, think of Ken at Winchester as fulfilling the duties of Canon of the Cathedral, of Fellow of College, and of Chaplain to the Bishop, while at the same time he undertook the charge of the poor and neglected parish of St. John in the Soke on the outskirts of the city. The life must have been most congenial and attractive to Ken. The musical services of the Cathedral would appeal strongly to one who was accustomed to have an organ in his own room at college, and who was wont, as his great-nephew tells us, "to sing his Morning Hymn to his Lute before he put on his Cloaths." His position as Fellow would bring him into close relationship with the "children" of William of Wykeham, for whom he wrote his *Manual of Prayers*. His pastoral instincts would find congenial activity among the poor people of the Soke. His duties as Chaplain would introduce him to the wider world of London, where in the Old Church at Chelsea his preaching quickly attracted attention. At Winchester, too, was a considerable circle

of friends and relatives with whom Ken was on terms of happy intimacy. There was the aged Izaak Walton, who had married as his second wife Ken's half-sister, and who had been to him for many years as a foster-father. Among his fellow-Canons in the Close was William Hawkins, also Rector of Droxford, who in 1676 married the only daughter of the "prince of fishermen," and so became connected by marriage with Ken. His maternal uncle, John Chalkhill, son of the Elizabethan poet, was a Fellow of College, and would sometimes, at any rate, be at Winchester. There was also the society of Bishop Morley at Wolvesey.

We get a glimpse of Ken's manner of life at this period in the brief biography written by his great-nephew, William Hawkins the younger. The words, "Glory be to God" were, we learn, his constant prescript to all his letters and papers. He scrupulously kept the fasts and festivals of the Church. He "strictly accustomed himself to but one Sleep, which often obliged him to rise at One or Two of the Clock in the Morning, and sometimes sooner. This grew so habitual, that it continued with him almost till his last illness. And so lively and cheerful was

his Temper, that he would be very facetious and entertaining to his Friends in the Evening, even when it was perceived that with difficulty he kept his Eyes open."

Of Ken's connection with St. John in the Soke we learn a few interesting particulars. The income of the benefice was so small that it was difficult to find anyone to accept it. Ken undertook the duties gratuitously, and "he kept up there," so Hawkins tells us, "a constant course of preaching, and brought many Anabaptists to the Church of England, and baptized them himself." For this purpose he used the Office of Adult Baptism, which had been lately added to the Prayer Book, in the revision of 1662. A curious story is preserved among the Baker Manuscripts in the British Museum in connection with Ken's ministry in the Soke. A young boy, subject to fits and entirely unable to speak or walk, was restored to health, it appears, within a few days of his being baptized by Ken. "The Friday before he was baptized," testified his mother, Sarah Cante, "he had so violent a fit, that the spectators very much doubted of his recovery. The force of that fit turned out his last two teeth by the roots, so that he then had none left. About a week

and odd days after he was baptized, sitting at the Door in his chair, one of his Playmates, a little Girle, called him Tattie ; the child (which never spake before) answered, my name is not Tattie, my name is Mathew. Dr. Kenn has baptized me. About a fortnight after, sitting at the Door in a chair, he started up and went among his Playfellows, without being bid, and without leading ; and that very day month following his Baptism he hath continude well, in speaking and going, and has fourteen teeth . . . and is as fine a lad in my eyes as one in an hundred."[1] From a passage in Evelyn's Diary, dated 15th September, 1586, it is clear that Ken regarded the cure as miraculous, for he afterwards related the story to James II when staying at the Deanery, as "a greate miracle, happening in Winchester to his certaine knowledge." Ken's ministrations in the Soke seem to have been much appreciated by the poor people, who crowded to the church, we are told, to hear him preach.

As Fellow of Winchester, Ken occupied a room at College next to that of his uncle

[1] Quoted by Anderdon, and repeated by Plumtree, i, p. 91 *n*.

and co-Fellow, John Chalkhill, which was situated upstairs over what is now known as " third chamber," and there for many years after his death his organ remained. He had, as Hawkins says, " an excellent genius and skill in music ; and whenever he had convenient opportunities for it he performed some of his devotional parts of praise with his own compositions, which were grave and solemn." For the use of the scholars of Winchester College he wrote his beautiful *Manual* of prayers and meditations on the Holy Communion, and the Morning and Evening Hymns. The *Manual* first appeared in 1674, and has been used since by many generations of Winchester scholars. It was republished in 1871 by Dr. Moberly, with a short sketch of Ken's career. There was also a little book entitled Bishop Ken's *Approach to the Holy Altar*, compiled by Anderdon, partly from the *Manual* and partly from Ken's *Practice of Divine Love*, which had a wide circulation. It was out of print in 1884, when Dr. Fearon the Head Master had it reprinted, and gave a copy to every Winchester boy who was Confirmed from 1884 to 1900. During Ken's lifetime the *Manual* passed through many editions, and some charming copies of those

early issues are preserved in the College Library. The earliest edition which contains the hymns is the eighth, which appeared in 1695, after Ken had left Winchester. It is a matter of some controversy as to where the famous hymns were written. "The honour of having witnessed their birth," says Dr. Plumptre, "is claimed by nearly as many places as the cities of Greece which boasted of having given birth to Homer." Brighstone believes that they were composed by their famous pastor as he walked to and fro along the yew hedge in the rectory garden. The good people at Wells point to the terrace on the south of the Palace gardens as the place of their composition. "WE do think," said a farmer from near Longleat, "that he wrote those hymns in the big house there." It will be remembered, however, that among the directions in the early editions of the *Manual,* addressed to Ken's ideal scholar, Philotheus, we find this: "Be sure to sing the morning and evening hymn in your chamber devoutly." It is not unreasonable to suppose that the reference is here to Ken's own hymns, which seem to have been printed in leaflet form some years before they appeared in the *Manual.* At

any rate, Dr. Plumptre, who carefully investigated the matter, came to the conclusion that they were written prior to the first edition of the *Manual*, and that therefore "Winchester may cherish the thought that they came from Ken's pen and lips there, and were accompanied by him on his lute, or on the organ which was the cherished treasure of his chamber in the College." [1] Outside the Psalter, it has been said, no lines have ever been so familiar to English Churchmen as Ken's Morning and Evening Hymns.

Ken was appointed Prebendary of the Cathedral in 1669, and held the position until he became Bishop of Bath and Wells fifteen years later. His signature frequently occurs in the Cathedral Chapter books, but we meet with few points of interest with respect to him. In the year following his installation a Chapter Order is passed for the better and more orderly celebration of Divine service and sacraments among the Prebendaries, instead of leaving them to be performed by "Vicars or petty Canons." A little later the Cathedral bells are "new cast," and a new tenor bell added to the

[1] Vol. ii, p. 219.

peal. Sometimes Ken acts as almoner for the Chapter, as when "Mr. Treasurer is ordered to pay 20s. to Mr. Ken" to be sent to a poor curate in extreme necessity. The most interesting entry is one dated 27th June, 1672, to the effect that "the afternoon lecture in the Cathedral shall from henceforth be established in Mr. Ken, Prebendary of this Church, who is to be allowed 20s. for each Sunday." This arrangement doubtless met with approval, for Ken's reputation as a preacher was widely established. "His sweet face, musical voice, and thrilling earnestness fairly enchanted," we are told, the congregation that listened to him. We learn from the Diary of Lady Warwick of Lees Priory in Essex, "one of the devout and honourable women" of the period, how deep an impression Ken's sermons made on her. They moved her heart, she writes, "to long after the blessed feast" of the Holy Communion, to "weep bitterly," to "bless God and to have sweet communion with Him." Even Charles II could not resist the spell of his preaching: "I must go," he said, "and hear little Ken tell me of my faults." Bishop Burnet, never favourably disposed towards Ken, admits that

" he had a very edifying way of preaching ; but," he adds, " it was more apt to move the passions than to instruct ; so that his sermons were rather beautiful than solid ; yet his way in them was very taking." [1] Evelyn, in his Diary, bears repeated testimony to his influence in the pulpit, and in one passage speaks of " the wonderful eloquence of this admirable preacher " as " not to be expressed." [2]

The prebendal house which Ken occupied stood in the present garden of the Deanery, about midway between the Long Gallery and the river. Like other buildings in the Close, it had suffered much during the period of the Commonwealth, and had cost the Chapter a considerable sum of money to put in " sufficient repair." The " Howse," we learn was built with stone and covered with lead, and consisted of " one little Hall, one Kitchen with water comeinge into itt through a pype of Lead, one large dininge-roome and parlor both wainscotted, seaven Chambers," and a number of domestic offices. It also possessed a stately oaken staircase, and a garden and orchard " contayneinge by Estimation

[1] *History of His Own Times*, p. 383.
[2] Under March 20, 1687.

Photo by *W. T. Green, Winchester*

KEN'S PREBENDAL HOUSE (*now pulled down*)

(*From a drawing made by Mr. Richard Baigent, of Winchester, in* 1843)

half an Acre of ground." This house, being considered to be "ill-placed and in poor condition," was most unfortunately pulled down about the middle of the last century. It was the house which Ken had boldly refused to Nell Gwyn, saying, as his great-nephew tells us, that "a woman of ill-repute ought not to be endured in the house of a clergyman, especially the King's Chaplain." This incident unexpectedly led to Ken's appointment to a bishopric. For less than two years afterwards, the see of Bath and Wells being vacant, Charles is said to have stopped all applications for the post with the words, "Odds fish! who shall have Bath and Wells but the poor little black fellow who would not give poor Nelly a lodging."

On resigning his positions at Winchester, Ken made certain gifts to the College and the Cathedral. His old school-friend, John Nicholas, was now Warden of College, and to him he sent a donation of £30 towards the new schoolroom, and some scarce and valuable books for the library: to the Cathedral Library, now enriched by Bishop Morley's volumes, he also gave some costly works of theology. And so Ken left his "beloved retreat at Winchester," with its happy

associations of College and Cathedral and parochial visitations among his poor people in the Soke, for the wider sphere of episcopal responsibility. In some ways he may not have regretted the change. Several of his dearest friends with whom for many years he had been intimately associated in the old city had lately passed away. His uncle, John Chalkhill, had died in 1679, and had been buried in the south cloister of the College, where his epitaph, supposed to have been written by Ken, may be seen. On his return from abroad, nine months before, he found that the aged Izaak Walton had passed to his rest, and had been buried in Prior Silkstede's Chapel. Bishop Morley, too, whose death was the indirect cause of Ken's appointment to a bishopric, had, within a few months, followed his friend Walton to the grave, and had been laid to rest with him in Winchester Cathedral.

A few memorials still exist of Ken's association with Winchester. His name may be seen in the College cloisters, and his coat of arms in "School"; his gift-books remain in the Cathedral Library; and his statue, close to that of Izaak Walton, occupies a niche on the great screen in the choir

of the Cathedral; and these, at any rate, serve to remind us of one whose "moral character," in the words of Lord Macaulay, "seems to approach, as near as human infirmity permits, to the ideal perfection of Christian virtue."[1]

[1] *History of England*, Ch. V.

CHAPTER XV

THE CLOSE GARDENS

At the time of the Great Rebellion some fine trees, relics of monastic days, were standing in the Close. In that part of it known as Mirabel Close there stood, we learn, "an Oake-tree," "one great Ashe," one "great Walnut tree," and "two old Elmes," beside several smaller trees. A single "Ewe-tree," valued at "tenn shillings," stood in the old cloister-garth; and to the east of the Cathedral, where the monastic garden, known as "Paradise," was situated, were "fower elms," apparently large trees.[1] All these trees appear to have been cut down for timber and sold by the Parliamentary agents.

Indeed, the existing arrangement of the Close, with its prebendal houses, its fine lawns and pleasant gardens, dates for the most part from the time of the Restoration. When the surviving canons returned to the Close in 1660, after fifteen years banishment under the Commonwealth, their property was

[1] See "Parliamentary Survey," 1647, printed in *Cathedral Documents*, ii, pp. 90, 91.

in a desperate condition. The glorious Cathedral had been shamefully defaced, and the Chapter Library scattered to the winds. The deanery and most of the houses were more or less in a state of ruin. The lead of the roofs and the pipings, and in some instances the very timber beams, had been plundered and sold. Their stately trees—"the oake," the "great ash," the "great walnut," the "old elms," the "ewe-tree"—were all gone. The gardens, with many a choice shrub and flower such as may be seen figured in Gerard and Parkinson, were desolate wastes. St. Aethelwold's "sweet flood of water, abounding with fish," still flowed through the precincts, but was choked with weeds and rubbish.

The Dean and Chapter quickly set to work to remedy this state of things. Between the years 1660 and 1670 nearly £18,000 was spent "in reparations or cathedral and Close, and beautifying and furnishing or Quire, and building and Repayring the Deane and Prebend-Houses, and in other various extraordinary Expenses occasioned by ye Spoyle and injury done in the time of Usurpation." During this period and the years that immediately followed, the various Close houses were either entirely

rebuilt or extensively repaired. Important additions, including the long, red-brick gallery, were made to the deanery. Other houses reveal by the dates on the lead-work of their guttering the actual time of restoration. The gardens, too, were put into order, and the walls that divided them duly repaired, while new trees were planted in the place of those cut down during the time of the Commonwealth.

In monastic times the office of Hortulanus, or Gardinarius, was no unimportant one. We find that from one of the Convent Rolls, now in the Cathedral Library, that in the year 1334 the gardiner-monk was one Robert de Basyng, whose duty it was to supply the refectory with vegetables and fruit, and the church with flowers for the high altar on great festivals. The gardens were probably situated in the western part of the monastic enclosure, where a large artificial mound, not uncommon in mediaeval gardens, may still be seen. One of the Rolls also speaks of a "South gardyn," which was probably situated to the south-east of the Guest-house. There was also another garden or orchard at the north-east of the Cathedral, spoken of as Paradise, which was probably

planted with fruit-trees, mainly with apples, which were much used in Advent and Lent.[1]

A hundred years after the dissolution of the monastery we find the "garden commonly called the Paradise" still well stocked with "fruit-Trees" to the extent of "halfe an acre of grounde"; while the ground to the west of the enclosure was divided by stone walls into several separate gardens attached to the prebends' houses. In the Dean's garden "three small Fishponds" remained,[2] doubtless those used in monastic days to maintain the supply of fresh fish for fast days. These ponds no longer exist; but an interesting structure may still be seen on the banks of St. Aethelwold's stream. This is an ancient summer-house associated with the name of Izaak Walton. It is situated in what was then the garden of Thomas Ken within a few yards of the river, beneath the shelter of the Close wall, and shaded with overhanging trees. It has been rebuilt since the days of Ken and Walton; but there is nothing impossible in the tradition which associates this spot with the aged fisherman, and we may be allowed to think of him in

[1] *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 79.

[2] "Parliamentary Survey." *Cathedral Documents*, vol. ii, p. 78.

his declining years in company with Ken, and Hawkins "whom I love," he wrote, "as my own son," or it may be with his old friend Bishop Morley who lived at Wolvesey on the other side of the Close wall, as sometimes sitting beneath the trees, engaged in cheerful conversation, or listening in silence to the "sweet loud music" of the nightingale. We may be sure, too, that the old man, now nearing his ninetieth year, would sometimes take his little grandchild Anne, the daughter of William and Anne Hawkins, into his brother-in-law's garden and stroll with her along "the gliding stream full of great stores of trout."

Ancient trees have often interesting associations, and we would fain know more of those now standing within the Close walls. The "great trees" of the Priory, which were flourishing a hundred years after the dissolution, were, as we have seen, almost certainly cut down and sold for timber at the time of the Commonwealth. None of the existing trees are of a pre-Reformation date, unless it may be three or four yew-trees. But many of our trees were planted shortly after the Restoration. The magnificent elms in Mirabel Close are associated with the

visits of Charles II to the deanery. The seventeenth century was an age of tree-planting, especially in gardens, and the mulberry and the fig-tree seem to have been special favourites. An ancient mulberry in the garden of No. 3 was probably planted at this time. William Gilpin, in his classical work on *Forest Scenery* published in 1808, tells us that "In the Deanery-garden at Winchester there stood lately (so lately as the year 1757) an ancient fig-tree. Through a succession of many deans it had been cased up and shielded from winds and frost. The wall to which it was nailed was adorned with various inscriptions in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, alluding to such passages of the sacred writings as do honour to the fig-tree. After having been presented with several texts of Scripture the reader was informed, by way of climax, that in the year 1623 King James I tasted of the fruit of this fig-tree with great pleasure." [1] The tree has now disappeared, and also the inscription on the wall.

The lime avenue, leading down to the great west doorway, forms a beautiful approach to the Cathedral. There seems to be

[1] Gilpin's *Forest Scenery*, 3rd ed., vol. i, p. 153.

no actual record of the planting, but the custom of making avenues of lime-trees was borrowed from the French towards the close of the seventeenth century, and the avenue probably dates from that time. Moreover, in Buck's picture of the Cathedral, dated 1736, the avenue is shown, where the trees are represented as small ones. There is a second avenue of limes within the walls of the Close which stretches for some distance along the right bank of St. Aethelwold's stream almost as far as the boundary wall. The trees, like those in the Cathedral avenue, have been rightly pollarded more than once, and to this they owe their preservation. Near the head of the avenue, in what is now the deanery garden but formerly that of Thomas Ken, two majestic plane-trees stand close together. They are fast-growing trees, and may possibly have been planted about the year 1780, when Warden Harry Lee is said to have planted the existing plane-trees in his garden and College meads.[1] They are nearly of the same size and appearance, and are apparently of about the same age. Not far distant will be seen on the lawn a flat stone with a Latin inscription which records

[1] Kirby's *Annals of Winchester College*, p. 371.

that the oak-tree overshadowing it was planted by Dean Garnier in his ninety-first year, in 1867. The Dean was a great arboriculturist, and a fine tulip-tree in one of the Close gardens is also said to have been planted by him. A clump of cedars in another garden owe their origin to some cones brought from Palestine by Canon Carus, whose name is commemorated in the Carus Greek Testament Prizes at Cambridge.

Early in May the appearance of the Close is at its best. The great elm-trees and the limes in the avenues are breaking into tender green. The flowering shrubs are in all their glory. On the old Priory gateway and on several of the canon's houses the lovely wistaria is in blossom. The laburnums and lilacs, the pink and white may-trees, and the guelder-rose are in full flower, and the monastic walls are resplendent with the pale yellow blossoms of the wallflower. The swifts are again shrieking around the Norman tower of the Cathedral as they have done every summer since Bishop Giffard rebuilt it; the chiff-chaff and the garden-warbler and the turtle-dove have returned to their home of peace, and the cuckoo will be calling from the magnificent plane-trees in the Dean's garden.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BIRDS OF THE CLOSE[1]

If it be true, as St. Thomas Aquinas used to say, *Ubi aves, ibi angeli*, then the Cathedral Close of Winchester must be haunted by legions of angels. For it is a very paradise of birds. Although situated nearly in the centre of the city, and with a thoroughfare for foot-passengers running through it, which is traversed daily between the hours of 6 a.m. and of 10 p.m. when the gates are shut and barred, by a large number of people, yet the Close possesses many of those natural features and happy conditions which render it congenial to our feathered friends. Sheltered on the north by the mighty fabric of the Cathedral, and entirely enclosed by lofty walls which offer attractive nesting-places to many species, there is a sense of safety and seclusion in the ancient Benedictine enclosure which birds are not slow to recognise. The Close, too, is finely timbered, and can show some magnificent elms, while a large portion of it is divided into well-stocked gardens in which an abundant food-supply seldom fails. Moreover through the

[1] This chapter appeared in *The Cornhill* for March, 1912.

eastern part of the precincts there runs a stream of swift and clear water—so attractive and so essential to bird-life—as full to-day of "stores of trouts" as when, nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, good old Izaak Walton wandered along its banks, and listened to the "heavenly voices of those little nimble musicians of the air, that warbled forth their curious ditties" in the garden of his dear friend and relative, Thomas Ken, Prebendary of the Cathedral.

The Close, as becomes its ancient and dignified associations, possesses a rookery of its own, and last spring between forty and fifty nests might be counted in the lofty elm-trees situated in those portions of the enclosure known as Mirabel Close and Water Close. Several pairs of rooks also attempted to take possession of the trees which now occupy the site of the ancient monastic cloister-garth; but for some mysterious reason which baffles the mind of man, this proceeding met with the serious disapproval of the rest of the colony, and the half-formed nests were deliberately torn to pieces. "Depend upon it," as Bishop Westcott who took a keen interest in the palace rookery at Bishop Auckland, used to say, "Depend

upon it, the rook has a deep purpose in everything which he does." What the purpose was in this particular instance we will not venture to determine. But the rookery has undoubtedly increased of recent years, and no slaughter of the innocents ever takes place within the sacred precincts of the Close, and it may be that, in solemn convocation, it was recognised that the colony was already large enough, and that no increase in the number of nests could be allowed. At any rate, after several vain but spirited attempts, the intruding birds retired baffled and disappointed, leaving behind them, as evidences of their fruitless toil, an untidy mass of broken twigs scattered over the green turf beneath the trees. Later on in the season, when the nesting operations are well over, and the young birds have become strong upon the wing, a vast number of rooks occupy the trees of the Close. Towards the end of the summer some three hundred birds at least might be seen every evening about sunset wheeling about in the air before finally settling down for the night in their lofty roosting-trees.

Needless to say, jackdaws abound in the Close, as they mostly do in the vicinity of

cathedrals and churches and ancient ruins. They make their nests in the hollows of the old elm-trees, as well as on the Cathedral and among the ruins of Wolvesley Castle. Very amusing is "the steeple-loving daw" but withal very mischievous in his ways. There is a large pear-tree in my garden situated in the south-eastern corner of the Close, which in most seasons bears an abundant supply of excellent fruit; but just as the pears begin to ripen, unless a careful watch be kept, the jackdaws will ruin the entire crop. The presence of a single daw upon the tree is a sufficient warning to gather the pears without delay; otherwise in the early dawn, before the Close gates are open, a company of jackdaws will descend upon the spoil, and with strong, sharp beaks, will attack the ripening fruit until by breakfast-time hardly a single sound pear will be left upon the tree.

Winchester, it is true, cannot boast of such a colony of half-domesticated pigeons as frequent the precincts of the British Museum or of St. Paul's Cathedral, but it possesses many pairs of the far more handsome and interesting wood-pigeon or ring-dove, which breed every season in the Close.

There were two nests in my garden alone last spring, and several in the lofty elms of Mirabel Close, and the fine birds in their lovely breeding plumage were a source of constant interest and delight. For many years, too, perhaps as long ago as the days of the Benedictine monks, one or more pairs of stock-doves had regularly bred in the Cathedral tower, to which every May a number of swifts return. During the late work of restoration, when from 1905 to 1910 the tower was surrounded by scaffolding, and workmen were constantly about, the stock-doves were forced to forsake their ancient home, and the deep stone recesses, where for generations they had reared their young, remained bare and deserted. The scaffolding was removed in the winter of 1910, and early in the coming spring I began eagerly to watch the Norman Tower in the hope that the birds would return to their former haunts. To my delight, one morning just after sunrise in the last week of March, I saw a pair of stock-doves flying over the Close towards the Cathedral, where they settled on one of the window ledges in the tower, near to the spot utilised in former years as a nesting-place. By the middle of April two white

eggs were again lying in the old crevice of the Cathedral Tower.

But the great elm-trees of Mirabel Close are the home of other species, more striking and interesting, and far rarer, than rooks and jackdaws and wood-pigeons. The chief distinction of the Close, from an ornithological standpoint, is the presence of those wise and weird creatures, more often heard than seen, whose strange and hollow cries make night hideous or joyful according to the temperament of the hearer—the white or barn owl, and the brown or twany owl. From the earliest times the owl has been regarded, perhaps not unnaturally, as a bird of ill-omen. Its strange, half-human appearance, its solitary nature, its nocturnal habits, its weird and uncanny cries, all lent themselves to superstitious fancies. The old Hebrew prophet sighs with a broken heart over his native city inhabited only by owls and satyrs. In classical literature such epithets as "moping" and "unclean" were generally applied to this "ill-omened" bird. In our own literature the owl is usually associated with fearful foreboding and coming disaster. Shakespeare has introduced the shrieking of an owl into the murder

scene of "Macbeth"; and an "owlet's wing" formed part of the ingredients of the witches' cauldron. The lines of Chatterton well illustrate the prevailing opinion of our poets :—

> "Down in the dark and solitary vale,
> Where the curst screech-owl sings her fatal tale."

But there is another side to the picture. To most bird-lovers the owl is among the most fascinating of birds. Its weird, almost supernatural, characteristics only give additional interest to its personality. Much as I love the rooks with their unfathomable ways, I would rather be without the rooks than without the owls. We have only, to my knowledge, one pair of white owls in the Close; and their mansion is to be found, not, as we might expect, in the Cathedral tower, where not uncommonly, as Tennyson puts it :—

> "Alone and warming his five wits,
> The white owl in the belfry sits;"

but in the vast hollow of an immemorial elm-tree. Here, year after year, the successive eggs are laid, and the young birds reared. All through the summer months, after the sun has set, the snoring and hissing of the owlets will be heard, while the old birds may be seen—truly a lovely sight—floating

over the gardens of the Close in search of rats and mice with which to feed their family.

The brown owl, like its relative the white owl, is a constant resident in the Close, and also has its home in the same hollow elm-tree. The young are hatched in April, but for a considerable time they remain in or near the nest; and there is no prettier picture than a little company of fluffy owlets, with large, staring eyes, sitting in a row on a naked branch near the entrance to their home. The note of the brown owl is the well-known hoot, which the poets as a body regard as "melancholy," but which to some persons is a melodious and most musical sound. It is well to know that this latter opinion was shared by Shakespeare, and by Wordsworth. In his exquisite song to "Winter," at the conclusion of "Love's Labour Lost," Shakespeare sings :—

"Where icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall.
And milk comes frozen home in pail;
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whoo!
To-whit! tu-whoo! *a merry note*."

In one of his finest and most touching

poems, Wordsworth speaks of a young boy who "blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, that they might answer him":—

> "And they would shout
> Across the watery vale, and shout again,
> Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,
> And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
> Redoubled and redoubled; *concourse wild*
> *Of mirth and jocund din!*"

Passages to the same effect might also be quoted from Shelley and Burns and Sir Walter Scott. Gilbert White, too, held the opinion that "owls have very expressive notes"; they hoot, he says, "in a fine vocal sound, much resembling the *vox humana*, and reducible by a pitch-pipe to a musical key." When brown owls hoot, their throats, he tells us, swell as big as a hen's egg, and usually, he found by experiment, they hoot in B flat. What the particular note may be, I will not venture to suggest, but on a still, dark night in autumn or winter, it is magnificent to listen to the brown owls as with loud, clear hootings—"tu-who-o-o"—they break the silence of the Close. In mediaeval times the good monks were accustomed to rise at midnight, and making their way along the chilly corridors to chant the praises of God in their glorious Cathedral. The Benedictine monks are gone now, but the praises

of God are still uttered in the midnight, and sometimes the whole night through, by the brown owls (in parts of Devonshire they are known as "seraphim"[1]) who with loud, antiphonal rejoicings, and wild, ringing notes of gladness, answer each other in the mist from the Close to College meads and from College meads to the Close. Last Christmas Eve, I remember, they were loudly jubilant, and continued to shout forth their "merry notes" till dawn, when the carol was taken up by other feathered choristers, to wit, several song-thrushes, a robin redbreast, and a wren.

In addition to the birds already mentioned, many species make their home in the Close throughout the year. Needless to say, sparrows and starlings abound; blackbirds and thrushes are plentiful; and there are always a number of chaffinches, of blue-tits and oxeye-tits, in the gardens, and a few greenfinches and hedge-sparrows. The rarer and more timid species chiefly haunt the long line of trees and brushwood which border the banks of the stream that runs through the eastern part of the Close, parallel to the

[1] See *Bird Life and Bird Love*, by R. Bosworth Smith, p. 22.

wall which separates it from the precincts of Wolvesey Castle. Here, running up the trunks of the lime-trees, which form a beautiful avenue beside the clear trout-stream, the interesting little tree-creeper will often be seen; here the retiring bullfinch loves to dwell; and here, especially in the yew-trees, the lovely goldcrest, the tiniest of British birds, less than a quarter of an ounce in weight, may often be found, fluttering from branch to branch, and uttering its attractive call. The goldfinch, too, is not infrequently seen. With the approach of spring the summer migrants begin to make their appearance, and add considerably to the number of residents in the Close. The chiff-chaff is the first to be heard, and is soon followed by its near relative the willow-wren. April sees the arrival of the swallows and house-martins; and a little later, when the Close is in full glory of lilac and laburnum, of wistaria and whitethorn, the fly-catcher will appear in the gardens, and the swifts will return to the Cathedral Tower, and the soft cooing of the turtle-dove will be heard, and the cuckoo will announce his arrival.

During the summer months the fruit-trees in the gardens of the Close offer a great

attraction to the birds. Indeed, unless the trees are netted, it is scarcely possible to keep the blackbirds and thrushes away. But in the garden belonging to the house once occupied by Warden Nicholas there stands an ancient mulberry-tree, planted probably in the days of Charles II, gnarled and hollow and broken, but still possessing branches of considerable size. It is impossible to net the mulberry-tree, which most seasons bears a vast quantity of fruit. When the berries are ripe the tree is beset from sunrise to sunset by fruit-loving birds. Blackbirds, thrushes, and starlings, many of them young birds, are the most numerous. The tree seems literally alive with birds gorging themselves on the luscious fruit. Frighten the birds away, and within a few minutes individuals will be seen returning from every quarter, and again settling among the thick foliage. Mulberries seem to have a greater attraction for some species than even strawberries and raspberries. Chaffinches and willow-wrens flock to the banquet, and with them the scarcer and more local garden-warbler. Strange to say, this bird was entirely overlooked by Gilbert White, although it doubtless visited Selborne in the

eighteenth century as it does to-day. It is a shy and sober-coloured bird, whose song is hardly distinguishable from that of the blackcap, and it loves the unfrequented shrubberies of gardens. It had its nest last summer somewhere along the thick brushwood that borders the river, and it reared its brood in safety, for there were always several present, both old birds and young, concealed in the thick foliage of the mulberry-tree when the fruit was ripe.

During the autumn and winter months numbers of sea-gulls will fly over the precincts of the Close, and sometimes a few will settle, with loud cries, along the course of the stream, and splash about in the water. Wild-duck, too, in the morning and evening flights, may be heard passing overhead; and even a solitary heron may be seen on its way to the water-meadows. Now and again, but not often, a pheasant finds its way into the Close, and, evidently ill at ease in its strange surroundings, tries to hide among the brussels-sprouts and currant-bushes. Another occasional visitor is the long-tailed tit, which, unlike the wandering game-bird, is entirely at home in the Cathedral Close; and there is no more engaging

sight than a colony of "bottle-toms" flitting along from tree to tree and from branch to branch in perfect harmony and contentment. Hawks are but seldom seen, and Winchester cannot, like Salisbury, boast of its peregrine-falcons; but a kestrel may sometimes be noticed hovering about the Cathedral tower. And early one morning last autumn a great falcon, which, however, turned out to be a trained goshawk escaped from captivity, struck down a song-thrush as it was flying over the Close, leaving a pitiful litter of fluttering feathers on the lawn. As becomes an enclosure which can show several fine clusters of wild mistletoe on its lofty trees, the missel-thrush is a constant resident, and in autumn, when the hollies are bright with berries, several of these handsome birds may frequently be seen feasting together. At this season, too, our lawns are visited by the so-called "grey" wagtail, whose long tail and delicate yellow colouring render it one of the most elegant and graceful of British birds.

As Christmas approaches the Close becomes the haunt of a number of birds seeking food and shelter during the privations of winter. The great fabric of the Cathedral,

and the lofty Close walls help to break the violence of the rough winds, and the Canons' gardens afford many a snug nook and corner against the severity of frost and snow. And a supply of food is not lacking. More than one household in the Close remembers the birds. A table on the lawn, plentifully supplied with suet and bread-crumbs and hemp-seed and split cocoa-nuts appeals to the wants of different species. And all day long, from earliest dawn, the table, fixed on a pole so as to be out of the reach of prowling cats, is frequented by tits, robins, sparrows, starlings, chaffinches, greenfinches, hedge-sparrows, thrushes, and blackbirds. Now and again a nut-hatch will feed on the suet or cocoa-nut. But last winter a far more uncommon bird than any of the above regularly visited the table. As a general rule there is no more retiring bird than the hawfinch or grosbeak, but on the morning of 16th January, after a cold night, when the thermometer had registered fourteen degrees of frost, and a slight mantle of snow covered the ground, there was a hawfinch on the table. It was a male bird, and very handsome and conspicuous he appeared, with his rich chestnut-brown

plumage and a large conical bill. Although the table was only a few yards from the library window, he showed no signs of alarm or apprehension. Cold and hunger, and perhaps the love of hemp-seed, or it may be a sense of security in the Close, overcame the natural shyness of his disposition, and he took his breakfast in leisurely comfort and content. Never would he allow any other bird to be present when he was taking his fill of hemp-seed. The moment he alighted, he cleared the board of tits and sparrows, and even the starlings stood in awe of his dangerous beak. For over a month he regularly frequented the table, and when the spell of cold weather was over, and the more genial days of spring appeared, he did not forsake the hospitality of the Close, but evidently remained to breed, for later on in the season I saw several young hawfinches busy after the green-peas in the garden.

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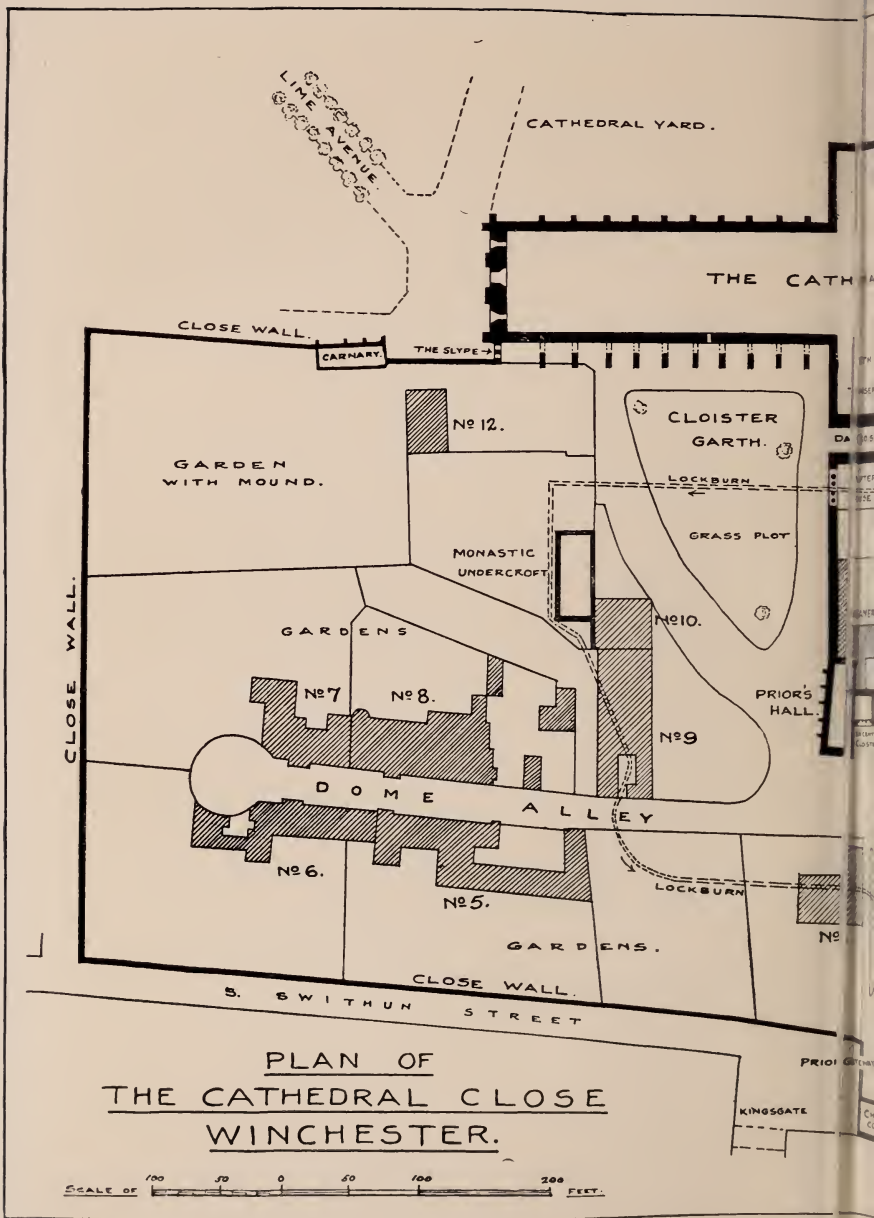

PLAN OF THE CATHEDRAL CLOSE WINCHESTER.

CLOSE WALL.
LOCKBURN.
Nº1.
Nº1 GARDEN.
LOCKBURN.
APPROXIMATE SITE OF KEN'S HOUSE.
LONG GALLERY.
AUDIT HOUSE.
DEANERY GARDEN.
MIRABEL CLOSE.
GUEST HOUSE.
GRASS PLOT.
Nº3.
LIME AVENUE
ST. ÆTHELWOLD'S STREAM
CLOSE WALL.
WOLVESEY GROUNDS
YARD.
PRIORY STABLES
Nº3 GARDEN.
CHEYNE COURT
WOLVESEY STABLES
CLOSE WALL.

PART II

LITERARY ASSOCIATIONS

CHAPTER I

THE CRADLE OF ENGLISH PROSE

At Winchester King Aelfred created our prose literature. Before him England possessed in her own language the great poem of Caedmon and a number of ballads and battle-songs. But of prose literature, as J. R. Green reminds us, she had none. "The mighty roll of the prose books that fill her libraries begins with the translations of Aelfred, and above all with the chronicle of his reign."[1] It is, indeed, said Dean Kitchin, "a source of legitimate pride for Winchester that within her walls Aelfred made the first and greatest history book of the English people."[2] As Whitby has been called the Cradle of English Poetry, so may Winchester claim to be the Cradle of English Prose.

The early days of the great King were to a large extent spent at Winchester under the care and guidance of the wise and kindly St. Swithun. Among the memories of his boyhood was doubtless his father's famous "Donation" to the Church, in which, as

[1] *History of the English People*, vol. i, p. 80.
[2] *Winchester*, p. 14.

the Chronicle has it, "he booked the tenth part of his lands to God's praise and his own eternal welfare."[1] This charter, which is still preserved in the British Museum, was written at Winchester, and laid with much solemnity on the high altar of the Cathedral church in the presence of Bishop Swithun and the assembled Witan.

His early inclination to literature is well illustrated by the story, related by Asser, of the Queen showing her sons an illuminated book of Saxon poetry, and saying, "Whichever of you first learns the songs shall have the volume for his own." Aelfred, we are told, "took the book out of her hand and went to his master to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it." On the death of his father Aethelwulf, whose remains lie in one of the coffers on the choir screen of the Cathedral, Aelfred doubtless resided almost entirely with the bishop at Wolvesey. It must have been an occasion of great grief to him, when, in his fourteenth year, his kindly preceptor died. The boy doubtless stood by in sorrow as they laid the aged bishop to rest, not within his Cathedral, but at his own desire in the churchyard

[1] Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, under A.D. 855.

outside amongst the common people, where his grave might take the sunshine and the rain.

Some eight or nine years later, on the death of his last surviving brother Aethelred, Aelfred, now in his twenty-third year, ascended the throne of Wessex, which he was destined to occupy for a period of nearly thirty years. This period may be conveniently divided into four parts. The first part was almost entirely occupied in warfare with the Danes, and concluded with the Peace of Wedmore in the year 878, when, comparatively speaking, the land had rest for fifteen years. This second period was utilised by the King in giving good government to his people, in fostering the arts of peace and war, and in producing those literary works with which his name will ever be associated. This beneficent occupation was rudely broken in 893 by the invasion of the terrible viking Hasting, who for four years gave the King unceasing trouble. At length, however, baffled by the genius and vigilance of Aelfred, Hasting broke up his army and "went southwards oversea to the Seine." Some three or four years of life yet remained to Aelfred, and during this last period he was enabled to

complete those literary undertakings which have shed undying lustre on his reign.

For the first few years after the Peace of Wedmore, Aelfred was entirely occupied in consolidating his kingdom. He soon, however, began to gather learned men about him. From Mercia he invited Werfrith Bishop of Worcester, and Plegmund whom he afterwards appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and two priests, Aethelstan and Werwulf, whom he made his chaplains. He induced St. Grimbald to come over from Flanders on the promise of making him Prior of the new minster he proposed to build at Winchester, and John the Old-Saxon from the monastery of Corbie, "a man learned in all kinds of literary science, and skilled in many other arts." Asser, also, Bishop of St. David's, who afterwards became his biographer, he prevailed upon "to spend at least six months of every year" with him. "I was accustomed at these times," says Asser, "to read to him whatever books he liked, for it was his usual habit, both day and night, amid his many occupations either himself to read books, or to listen while others read them." We also learn from the Saxon Chronicle how some

learned men came to him from Ireland: "Three Scots came to King Aelfred in a boat without any oars from Hibernia, whence they had stolen away because they desired, for the love of God, to be in foreign parts, they recked not where. The boat in which they came was made of two skins and a half, and they took with them food sufficient for seven days: and about the seventh day they came on shore in Cornwall, and soon after went to King Aelfred. Their names were Dubslane and Macbeth and Maelinmun." [1]

It was in the year 887, if Asser's story is to be literally accepted, that the King personally began his literary career. And it happened thus: On a certain day, Aelfred and Asser were talking together when the Bishop quoted a sentence which took the King's fancy. "Write it down for me," said the King, and he pulled out of his bosom a little book. "But," says Asser, "I could find no empty space in the book, for it was already full of various matters." He proposed, therefore, that the King should begin a new book, and hastily preparing a sheet, he wrote down the quotation. "On the same day," he adds, "I wrote three

[1] Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 891.

other quotations which pleased him." The King, "by divine inspiration," says Asser, was at once eager, not only to read, but to interpret in Saxon, that he might teach others. The book, thus began, grew until it became "almost as large as a Psalter," and the King called it his manual or handbook, because he kept it by him day and night, finding, as he said, no small comfort therein. It was on St. Martin's Festival, 11th November, 887, that King Aelfred thus began to "interpret in Saxon" on behalf of his people.

It was the King's object to give his people books in their own tongue. He took, therefore, some of the popular manuals of the age—"books that are most needful for all men to know"—and translated them freely into English. Among these were the *Pastoral Care* of Pope Gregory; the *History of the World* by Orosius; Bede's *Ecclesiastical History;* and *The Consolation of Philosophy* by the Roman Senator Boethius.

It is not possible, nor is it important, to determine the chronological order of Aelfred's works.[1] It is clear, however, that his *Manual*

[1] An excellent account of Aelfred's works is to be found in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. i, Ch. VI.

or commonplace book was the earliest of his compilations. The handbook consisted, it seems, of passages from the Bible and the Fathers translated into English, of personal observations on various matters, and also, as we learn from William of Malmesbury, of some historical notes and details. It is, indeed, a great misfortune that this book, the one we could least spare of all his works, is now entirely lost. With regard to his other works, priority has been claimed for Gregory's *Pastoral Care;* but if this is so, the book cannot have been completed before the year 890, for in the Preface Aelfred speaks of Plegmund as Archbishop, and Plegmund was not consecrated until that year. In the Preface, however, we get so clear an idea, not only of the decay of learning in England, but also of the King's method of working, and of his determination to disseminate knowledge, that we may well give it a prior consideration. After lamenting the ignorance that generally prevailed, and defending the use of the vernacular tongue in literature, the King goes on to say :—

"When I call to mind how the knowledge of the Latin tongue had before this fallen away throughout England, and yet

that many could read English writing, then began I, amidst other divers and manifold occupations of this kingdom, to turn into English the book which in Latin is named *Pastoralis*, and in English *Shepherd's Book;* sometimes word for word, sometimes meaning for meaning, as I had learned it from Plegmund my Archbishop, and Asser my Bishop, and from Grimbald my mass-priest, and from John my mass-priest. When I had learnt it so that I understood it, and so that I could quite clearly give its meaning, I turned it into English. And to each bishopric in my kingdom I will send one, and in each there shall be an 'aestel' worth fifty mancuses. And I command, in God's name, that no man take the 'aestel' from the book nor the book from the minister. It is unknown how long there may be such learned bishops as now, thank God, are nearly everywhere. Therefore I would that they should be always kept in that place, except the Bishop wish to have the book with him, or it be lent out anywhere, or anyone be making a copy from it."[1]

We must think, therefore, not only of the King and his helpers reading and translating

[1] Stopford Brooke's *King Aelfred*, p. 11.

the *Cura Pastoralis*, but also of the scribes in the Scriptorium of St. Swithun's monastery busy in making copies of the English version to be sent to the various bishoprics. One of these copies is preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It is an actual copy made at Winchester, and sent by the King to Bishop Werfrith of Worcester. The manuscript begins: "This book is for Worcester. King Aelfred bids greet Bishop Werfrith with loving and friendly words."

From a literary point of view, Aelfred's preface to his translation of Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis* is the first important piece of English prose we possess; while linguistically it is, on account of its age, of unique value. The book itself was, of course, specially designed for the use of the clergy, who sadly needed guidance and encouragement; but the King was far from unmindful of the needs of the laity. For the nation at large, as well as for the Church, he translated the histories of Bede and of Orosius that his people might know somewhat of the story of their own land and of the countries beyond the sea. With regard to Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English*, the King omits large portions of the original. He passes over

the theological discussions, the Pope's letters, the famous ecclesiastical conference at Whitby, and many details of purely local interest; while on the other hand it is disappointing to find that very little new matter is inserted. It was otherwise with his English version of Orosius, which has been well called "a truly astonishing production." Orosius was a young Spanish ecclesiastic, a friend and disciple of the great Augustine, at whose desire he undertook the task of compiling a history of the world "from Adam to Alaric." The work, which he dedicated to his master, was regarded in the tenth century, and indeed for a long time afterwards, as the standard authority on universal history. Aelfred selected this book as the best medium for enlarging the outlook of his people with regard to history and geography. With this object "he abridges, paraphrases, and enlarges at discretion, often leaving out whole chapters, and in places inserting entirely new matter." This new matter is often of very considerable interest, as when he gives an account of the geography of Northern Europe, or tells the story "with gossip worthy of Herodotus" of the famous sea-voyages of Othere and

Wulfstan along the coast of Norway and the shores of the Baltic. These early explorers the King invited to Winchester, where we may think of him, as Mr. Stopford Brooke conjectures, sitting at his desk, pen in hand, while they related to him their strange and thrilling adventures.

It may have been the work of editing these historical books that led Aelfred to consider the matter of the old Saxon Chronicle. That there were several recensions of this record in existence before the time of Aelfred has been clearly shown by Professor Earle. But they seem to have been in a fragmentary and unsatisfactory condition. At any rate, about the year 891 the King undertook the task of re-editing the older portion of the Chronicle and of continuing the history up to his own time. "At Wolvesey Castle," writes Dean Kitchin, "with the help of the brethren of St. Swithun's Convent, the earlier part of the book was compiled and copied, an annalist's simple record of facts down to the time of contemporary history. Copies of this earliest part were sent to different places; one to the Scriptorium at Burh or Peterborough, another to the monks of Christ Church in Canterbury, and elsewhere;

the mother-manuscript being kept at Wolvesey fastened to a desk by a chain, that all who would and could might read it as it grew from year to year."[1] This latter part, dating from the accession of his brother Aethelred, and including the account of his own reign up to the year 891 and probably beyond it, is believed to have been written by the King himself. The actual manuscript, perhaps penned by Aelfred's own hand, is said to be the one now preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge. If not the original document it is at any rate an early copy made at Winchester shortly after the King's death. It is a thrilling thought that in gazing on the Corpus copy of the Chronicle, bequeathed to the College by Archbishop Parker, one is gazing on "the oldest manuscript of the oldest historical work written in any Teutonic language."

It was during the brief period of peace that intervened between the departure of Hasting in 897 and his own death that Aelfred occupied himself with the translation of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. The work, written by the Roman

[1] *Winchester*, pp. 14-15.

senator in prison, had an immense reputation through the Middle Ages. Its influence may be traced in Dante's "Divine Comedy," and in Chaucer's poems. Gibbon speaks of it as "a golden book not unworthy the leisure of Plato or Tully," and Dr. Hook calls it "the handbook of the Middle Ages for all who united piety with philosophy." It has been well described by Mr. Stopford Brooke as "the last effort of heathen philosophy, and so near to a part of the spirit of Christianity that it may be called the bridge between dying paganism and living Christianity."[1] Aelfred's translation is executed with much freedom, showing the hand of one accustomed to literary undertakings; while the numerous additions give the book a special character of its own. Indeed, nearly one-third of the "translation" consists of original matter, in which we touch, as it were, the lonely heart of the King, reminding us in a way of the *Thoughts* of Marcus Aurelius, or the *Confessions* of St. Augustine. To the *Consolation of Philosophy* Aelfred adds the consolation of the Christian religion. The prayers are utterances of extreme beauty; while "the sentences on

[1] *King Aelfred*, p. 19.

the Divine nature, steeped in reverence, awe and love, soar with ease into that solemn thought and adoration which we may well believe filled the silent hours of the King's meditation on his own stormy life and on the peace of God."[1]

Several other works have, with more or less probability, been ascribed to Aelfred. There is an Anglo-Saxon version of St. Augustine's *Soliloquia* which has been imputed to him, and which, in the opinion of Mr. Stopford Brooke, is very probably his. There is also among the Cotton Manuscripts a collection of proverbs or sayings, of a date considerably later than the ninth century, which the compiler attributes to Aelfred. The work is at any rate of interest as showing the reverence which after-generations felt for the memory of the King. The stanzas or paragraphs into which the compilation is divided begin with such phrases as these: "Thus quoth Aelfred, England's comfort," or "England's herdsman," or "England's darling." We learn from William of Malmesbury[2] that at the time of his death Aelfred was engaged on a translation of the Psalter;

[1] *King Aelfred*, p. 20.
[2] Bk. II, Ch. IV.

and it is fitting, as old Fuller says, that "a royal text should meet with a royal translator." There now exists in the Bibliotheque Nationale at Paris an eleventh-century manuscript of the first fifty psalms in Anglo-Saxon prose, and this, not unnaturally, has been taken to be the work of Aelfred. It seems, however, from the investigations of Dr. Douglas Bruce of Pennsylvania, that Aelfred's authorship of the "Paris Psalter" is doubtful.[1] Still, there is no reason to question the statement of William of Malmesbury that "the King died just as he had begun a translation of the psalms." We know nothing as to the cause of his death which occurred at the early age of fifty-two. The Saxon Chronicle simply contains the brief entry: "This year, 901, died Aelfred, the son of Aethelwulf, six days before the mass of All Saints." He was buried, we are told, in a coffin of porphyry marble, which —as his own foundation of the New Minster, over which St. Grimbald was to preside, was not yet completed—was placed in the old Cathedral church, which had been founded in the middle of the seventh

[1] See Stopford Brooke's *King Aelfred*, p. 25. n.; and *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, i, p. 106.

century by Cenwalh King of Wessex, and where lay the remains of Aethelwulf, Aelfred's father. It appears, however, that the presence of the body of the great King overawed the canons of the Cathedral, for they affirmed that the royal spirit, resuming its earthly dress, wandered nightly through the church and cloisters, and sadly disturbed the peace of the little community. So Edward the King removed the body of his father, and gave it a quiet resting-place in St. Grimbald's minster.

More than a thousand years have passed away since the death of Aelfred. "I have wished," he wrote towards the end, "to live worthily while I lived, and to leave to those who should come after me my memory in good deeds." The lapse of time has only served to bring out more clearly the greatness and nobility of his character. "Lord of the harp and liberating spear," he was the warrior and ruler, the statesman and law-giver, the singer, and father of his people. He was also, as we have seen, the creator of our English prose literature. By his translations, made at Winchester, and copied by the monks of St. Swithun's monastery, he spread knowledge among the clergy and

nobles alike. By his work on the Saxon Chronicle, compiling the earlier portion, and himself writing, it may be, the account of the Danish wars and the record of his own reign, he produced "the first vernacular history of any Teutonic people." "A saint without superstition, a scholar without ostentation, a warrior all whose wars were fought in the defence of his country, a conqueror whose laurels were never stained by cruelty, a prince never cast down by adversity, never lifted up to insolence in the day of triumph —Aelfred," wrote Professor Freeman, "is the most perfect character in history."

CHAPTER II

THE SCHOOL OF AETHELWOLD

THE efforts of King Aelfred to spread knowledge among his people met with but indifferent success. The condition of the monasteries at the time of his death, which according to the Saxon Chronicle took place in the year 901, was far from satisfactory, and the lamp of learning burnt low. Still, it was not suffered to be altogether extinguished. Inspired by the memory of his high example, the brethren of St. Swithun's monastery doubtless continued to make copies of his translations of Bede and Gregory, of Orosius and Boethius, which would circulate beyond the bounds of the royal city. And some years later, as one result of the Benedictine revival, the literary impulse given by the great King was renewed in so striking a manner that during the second half of the tenth century the School of Aethelwold became the most famous centre of art and learning in the kingdom.

Born at Winchester in the reign of Edward the Elder, the son of noble parents, Aethelwold early evinced "so sharp a wit" as to

mark him out for the ecclesiastical profession.[1] At the desire of the King, he became a novice at St. Swithun's Priory, and was eventually ordained to the priesthood, on the same day as his friend Dunstan, by Bishop Aelphege of Winchester. Shortly afterwards he accepted the position of chaplain to the bishop, and studied, we are told, theology under him. Later on he followed his friend Dunstan to Glastonbury, where he became dean or prior of the establishment. Some years later he was appointed to the abbacy of Abingdon, an ancient but deserted monastery, which the King was desirous of refounding, and which he and his royal mother richly endowed. From Abingdon, where he had established the Benedictine rule, he was recalled to Winchester on the recommendation of Dunstan, who now had become Archbishop of Canterbury, to undertake the oversight of his native diocese. This was in the year 963. It would be pleasant to think that his parents were still alive, and that they had the satisfaction of witnessing their son's success. On coming back, as Bishop of Winchester, to the home

[1] Cassan's *Lives of the Bishops of Winchester*, vol. i, pp. 122-127.

of his early days he found, we are told, the Old Minster of St. Swithun in a state of "horrible disorder." Finding the secular canons deaf to the voice of warning, he at length, supported by the King, ejected them from their stalls, and filled their places with Benedictines from his old abbey of Abingdon.

No sooner were the monks comfortably established in their new quarters than Aethelwold began to organise his school of novices. As a preliminary step, and at the desire of a council held at Winchester, he drew up a version of the Benedictine rule, under the title *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque.* It being found, however, that many of the newly-admitted postulants were unable to read the Latin language, the bishop, at the request of King Edgar, undertook to translate the *Regularis* into English, in acknowledgment whereof the King granted him the manor of Sudbourne in Suffolk.[1] There are several manuscripts of this Saxon version of the *Regularis* in existence, which carry us back in thought to the far-off days of the Benedictine revival, which took place nearly a

[1] See *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. i, Ch. III, p. 114.

thousand years ago in the, even then, old-world city of Winchester.

But the bishop was not content with merely framing regulations for his newly-established communities at Winchester and elsewhere. He himself is said to have been an enthusiastic teacher, who did not disdain to explain the difficulties of Latin grammar to the novices attending his school. By the young men and boys he was, we are told greatly beloved, for he was a most encouraging and inspiring teacher. Several distinguished scholars were trained by him at Winchester. Of these the most notable was Aelfric,[1] afterwards Abbot of Eynsham, who in the preface to his *Vita Aethelwoldi* speaks with warm appreciation and gratitude of the debt he owed to his great master. Besides writing a Latin Grammar for the use of the novices at Winchester, and a long series of English Homilies, to Aelfric also belongs the honour of being the first translator, to any large extent, of the Bible into English. To him are attributed a paraphrase of the first seven books of the Old Testament and parts of the books of Job and Esther. The school of Aethelwold may well have been

[1] *Ibid.*, 115.

proud of this accomplished alumnus of St. Swithun's monastery, for he was, as it has been claimed, "not only the greatest prose-writer, but also the most distinguished English-writing theologian in his own time, and for some centuries afterwards."[1]

In addition to Aelfric, there was Wulfstan, precentor of the Cathedral, who celebrates in turgid Latin the marvels of Aethelwold's minster, and also the wonderful manner in which the bishop brought "sweet floods of water abounding with fish" within the precincts of the monastery. Wulfstan was also, according to William of Malmesbury,[2] the author of a learned work on *The Harmony of Sounds;* while as precentor he doubtless took an important part in the preparation of that most interesting document known as the "Winchester Troper." A troper or tropary was a book of ecclesiastical music compiled for the use of the organ, and in the Winchester troper we have the actual tones and cadences used in the services of St. Swithun's in the tenth century.[3] There are two MSS. of this famous tropary, one in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and the

[1] *Cambridge History of English Literature*, i, p. 127.
[2] Bk. II, Ch. VIII.
[3] Kitchin's *Winchester*, p. 31.

other in the Library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge. The Bodleian MS. seems to be the earlier of the two, and is shown from internal evidence to have been written between the years of 979 and 1016. It is sometimes known as the tropary of Aethelred, since that King is mentioned in the Litany as the reigning sovereign. The Corpus MS. is considered by some critics to be a little later, about the middle of the eleventh century, but it contains hymns and musical notations of rare interest not included in the Bodleian MS., and possesses, moreover, a far purer text, in consequence of which it has been taken as the basis of the reproduction of the "Winchester Troper," published by the Henry Bradshaw Society.

But the school of Aethelwold, under the guidance and inspiration of the bishop, not only revived the literary traditions of the reign of Aelfred, it also became the most famous centre in England for the art of copying and illuminating manuscripts. Of this fascinating work many interesting examples still exist. The most precious is, beyond question, the *Benedictional*[1] of St.

[1] See Sir George Warner's valuable "Introduction" to the facsimile edition issued in 1910.

Aethelwold now in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire in the library at Chatsworth. As the name implies, a benedictional is "a collection of forms of episcopal benediction, appropriated to the different Sundays, Saints' days, and other festivals throughout the year, and used at a certain stage in the celebration of the Mass." The main interest of St. Aethelwold's *Benedictional* lies in the splendid series of miniatures and illuminated borders with which many of its pages are decorated.

This superb volume, the finest example of the Anglo-Saxon art of manuscript illumination in existence, consists of 119 leaves of good vellum, measuring 11½ inches in height by 8½ inches in width, in a state of most wonderful preservation. In spite of a few mutilations, the codex retains, in a more or less perfect condition, as many as forty-nine richly-decorated pages, of which thirty consist of miniatures. The rest have illuminated borders only, while the text is written in letters of gold. It is these magnificent illuminations, especially the full-page miniatures, that give the manuscript its unique value. Of the miniatures, the most interesting is the last in the volume, in which a

bishop, doubtless Aethelwold himself, is represented as giving the benediction to the congregation. In the background we have a drawing, sketched only in outline, of the Cathedral-church rebuilt by the bishop, the praises of which are sung, as we have noticed, by the monk Wulfstan. We see the central bell-tower and the wonderful golden weather-cock on which the poet dilates with enthusiasm. "Up there he stands aloft," cries Wulfstan, "over the heads of the men of Winchester, and up in mid-air seems nobly to rule the western world."

The volume was executed, as we learn from the preface, at the express command of Aethelwold, and for his own use in the Cathedral he had built. Indeed, it is quite possible, as Sir George Warner suggests, that the volume was prepared among others with the express object of providing the new Cathedral with service-books on a fitting scale of magnificence, and that the final benediction, "in dedicatione ecclesiae," associated with the miniature of the Cathedral-church, was recited from it for the first time on the memorable occasion when, on 20th October, 980, the building was solemnly dedicated by Archbishop Dunstan, in the

presence of King Aethelred and many of the nobles of the realm. We also learn from the preface the name of the scribe who wrote the volume. "Let all who look upon this book," he says, "pray always that after the term of the flesh I may abide in heaven. Godeman, the writer, as a suppliant, earnestly asks this." This Godeman was Bishop Aethelwold's chaplain, and was afterwards made by him Abbot of Thorney.[1] It is interesting to notice that his name occurs in the *Liber Vitae*[2] of the New Minster, but not among the brethren of the house. He was, doubtless, a monk of St. Swithun's monastery, in the scriptorium of which the great *Benedictional* was produced.

It is probable that the binding of this fine volume corresponded to the splendid character of its internal decoration, and it was doubtless religiously preserved among the treasures of St. Swithun's Priory until the time of the Reformation. As it was not only a service-book of exceptional splendour, but also, like the cup of St. Aethelwold, a relic of the good bishop, it was probably kept, as Sir George Warner suggests, not in

[1] Warner's "Introduction" to the *Benedictional*, pp.lv, lvi.
[2] Printed by the *Hants. Record Society*, 1892, p. 24.

the monastic library, but in the sacristy of the Cathedral, and was exposed at festivals on the high altar. How this priceless treasure came to be lost to the Cathedral is unknown. It was probably one of the seven books, the outer parts of them being plates of silver and gilt," mentioned in an inventory of Cathedral furniture delivered to Thomas Crumwell, as Vicar-General of Henry VIII, at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. If so, it may have been seized on that occasion, or at any rate despoiled of its rich covering; or it may have remained in the Cathedral for a century longer, till the fanatical soldiers of the Commonwealth ransacked the Chapter-house and muniment room, and flung its treasures to the winds.

In whatever manner the *Benedictional* disappeared, in the year 1720 it is found to be in the possession of William Cavendish, second Duke of Devonshire. At that time Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, was engaged in forming his famous collection of MSS. which still bears his name, and he was anxious, we learn, to obtain possession of the treasure. In the diary of Humphry Wanley, the Earl's librarian, under date "18th January, 1719-20," we meet with the following entry: "Certified

that His Grace the Duke of Devonshire thinks himself bound not to part with St. Aethelwold's book, given him by General Compton, although he hath no great value for it." Further negotiations followed, but with no better result, and the manuscript still remains one of the chief glories of the Chatsworth library. Its present binding is of "mellowed red morocco with a richly-tooled back, and a simple panel on the sides." The binding dates, says Sir George Warner, from about 1670, and is apparently the work of Samuel Mearns, bookbinder to Charles II, though there is no reason to suppose that the volume ever was in the royal library.

The Winchester School, founded by Aethelwold, continued to flourish for a considerable period. Alike in the old monastery of St. Swithun, and in the new monastery of St. Grimbald removed to Hyde just outside the walls of the city in the year 1110, scribes were constantly employed in the sacred task of copying and illuminating manuscripts. A few of these works still fortunately exist. In the Cathedral Library there is a fine copy of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, written on vellum, by a writer

who names himself Aedelmus. A monk of this name appears in the *Liber Vitae*[1] of the New Minster early in the eleventh century, and it is not impossible that he was the copyist of our manuscript. Other codices written at Winchester about this time, may be seen in the British Museum, and elsewhere. But the *Benedictional* of St. Aethelwold remains the most splendid example of manuscript illumination of the period, and the most striking witness of the art and culture associated with the name of the great prelate whose figure is represented, clasping the precious volume in his hand, on the altar-screen of Winchester Cathedral.

[1] Printed by *The Hants. Record Society*, 1892, p. 138.

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CHAPTER III

ST. SWITHUN'S SCRIPTORIUM

THERE is no more attractive feature in the daily routine of an ancient Benedictine house than that connected with the copying and the illuminating of manuscripts. Nearly all our early manuscripts are in some way associated with monasteries. For the scribes busied themselves not only with the production of sacred works, of Psalters, Missals, Books of Hours and the like, but also in transcribing the classical treasures of antiquity. At the time of the invention of printing it was monastic transcripts that provided the "copy" for the editions of Cicero and Virgil and other classical works first issued in Italy and Germany.[1] It must futher be remembered that most of our knowledge of mediaeval Europe we owe to the monastic chronicles. Without them we should be almost entirely ignorant of the history of our own country. We have only to call to mind the names of Gildas, of the Venerable Bede, of Abbot Ingulphus of Crowland, of William of Malmesbury,

[1] G. H. Putnam's *Books and their Makers*, vol. i, p. 25.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, Henry of Huntingdon, Richard of Devizes, and our own Thomas Rudborne, to realise our debt of gratitude.

The work of copying and illuminating manuscripts was usually carried out in little studies or cells, only large enough to contain a single person. The cells, or carrels[1] as they were called, were often the window recesses of the cloister, partially screened off and fitted up with "a deske to lye there books upon." But in many of the larger houses a special room, known as the scriptorium, was set apart for the purpose of writing. And this apartment was regarded as not the least sacred part of the establishment. Indeed, the work of a scribe was recognised as one of deep religious significance. A short prayer for the dedication of the scriptorium has been preserved, which shows the spirit in which the devout student approached his work: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless this workroom of Thy servants, and all that dwell therein; that whatsoever writings may be here read or written by them, they may receive with understanding,

[1] See Gasquet's *Old English Bible*, p. 36. G. H. Putnam's *Books and their Makers*, vol. i, p. 149.

and may bring the same to good effect."[1] Thus, at the famous monastery of St. Albans, we find the Abbot Paul, who presided over the house from 1077 to 1093, instituting a scriptorium, to which he induced some wealthy friends to present valuable codices,[2] a list of which may be found in the *Gesta Abbatium*, a chronicle of the Abbey. So, at the monastery of St. Martin's at Tournai, we have the pleasant picture of the Abbot Odo, at the close of the eleventh century, confiding the management of the temporal affairs of the house to Ralph the Prior, that he might have greater leisure for reading, and for supervising the work of the scriptorium.[3]

At St. Swithun's monastery, here at Winchester, a *scriptorium* doubtless existed. When Walkelin erected his mighty Norman Cathedral he also rebuilt the Saxon monastery of St. Aethelwold that adjoined it. While the work was in progress the bishop was happy in having as prior of the convent one of the most learned and enlightened men of the time. This was Prior Godfrey, who

[1] Quoted by G. H. Putnam in *Books and their Makers*, vol. i, p. 61.
[2] *Ibid.*, 69.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 77.

ruled over the house for twenty-seven years, from 1080 to 1107. A native of Cambray, he had been educated at St. Swithun's monastery, and became, as Bishop Milner says, the most celebrated of all its priors for literature, as well as for piety and religious discipline. His character and career are admirably portrayed by William of Malmesbury, who was a contemporary, and not a far distant neighbour of the prior, and who doubtless wrote from personal knowledge and acquaintance. The earlier part of the passage may be quoted in full. "Nor ought the memory of Godfrey, Prior of Winchester, to decay, who was celebrated in these times for his learning and his piety: his learning is attested by many works and epistles composed in his own familiar and pleasing style, but chiefly by his epigrams, written after the manner of satires, and his verses in praise of the chief personages of England. At St. Swithun's he restored every Divine office to its right condition, by touching them with his own grace, even though they had become obsolete from antiquity. The laws of religion and of hospitality he impressed on the monks, who to this day follow the footsteps of their prior: indeed, in this

house there is room for all, for travellers by land or sea, with boundless expense and ceaseless attention. Humble, too, was this holy man, in spite of his mighty erudition, so that nothing but what savoured of modesty and sweetness proceeded from this singular depository of philosophy."[1]

The last years of this distinguished man were passed, so William of Malmesbury writes, " in the furnace of chronic sickness," and for some time before his death he seems to have been almost entirely bedridden. He died in 1107, the year in which the great tower of the Cathedral fell, but whether before or after that event we do not know, and was buried in the Norman chapter-house, towards the north-east corner of the building.[2]

Under Prior Godfrey, the literary traditions of St. Swithun's, associated with the names of Bishop Daniel, of King Alfred and his scribes, of Aelfric and Wulfstan and the monk Godeman who wrote the magnificent *Benedictional* of St. Aethelwold, were worthily maintained, and the copyists were kept busy in the monastic scriptorium. A volume of Prior

[1] Book V.
[2] *Milner*, ii, p. 135.

Godfrey's epigrams is still happily preserved among the Cottonian manuscripts. Several of the priors, too, who succeeded him were men of literary ability. Prior Robert and Prior Walter, in the second half of the twelfth century, both left valuable writings relating to the diocese and the Cathedral, which are quoted by the historian, Rudborne, and which seem to have been carefully preserved in the conventual library up to the time of the Reformation. During their time, and indeed throughout the twelfth century, the work of illuminating manuscripts, for which the monastery had long been famous, was diligently carried on. Some splendid examples of this beautiful art remain. Among them may be mentioned the magnificent Psalter enriched with exquisite miniatures which was made at Winchester for Bishop Henry de Blois some time before the year 1160, and which is now preserved in the British Museum; and the splendid copy of the Vulgate, which is still the pride of the Cathedral Library. This manuscript of the Latin Bible was originally in two large and heavy folio volumes (now rebound in three volumes) written throughout in a very fine, clear hand, and all of it, said the late

Dean Kitchin,[1] the work of the same scribe. The numerous illustrations in it, he goes on to say, "were done by two different monks, the one taking lesser capitals, etc., in rather a coarse and common style of design and colouring, without gold or much finish of any kind, and the other painting the large illuminated capitals in very fine style: in design, subjects, colouring, and use of burnished gold, these artistic letters are a grand specimen of the art, as fresh and bright to-day as when they were first issued from the scriptorium. Several in the second volume were stolen, cut out with a sharp knife, more than half a century ago; and unfortunately the artist-monk who had charge of the work did not live to complete it. After we get beyond the middle of the codex, signs of the unfinished state begin to appear, first we notice that the inscriptions on the scrolls held in the hands of the personages portrayed are missing; then, as we turn over the leaves, we see that only some of the colours have been laid on, and these not finished off; then again, there is nothing except the gold-leaf, which evidently was done first, and worked up by the artist;

[1] Introduction to *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 89.

Photo by *W. T. Green, Winchester*

THE INITIAL "B." OF THE PSALTER IN OUR VULGATE

and lastly, we find examples of outlines only, beautifully executed both in design and workmanship, in a faint brown ink. In a few cases the capital letter is not even begun." It is a pathetic thought, this of the artist-monk, having devoted his life to the work of illuminating the precious codex in the scriptorium of St. Swithun's, at length, gradually failing in health and power, until unable to continue his beloved task, he enters the monastic infirmary, where he lingers on, it may be, for many months, in pain and weariness, until at last the summons comes, and he is laid to rest in the cemetery within the precincts of the monastery.

Shortly after the good monk's death the brethren were in danger of losing their precious manuscript altogether. At least, this codex is not impossibly the book referred to in the following story preserved in the mediaeval *Life of St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln*, now reprinted in the Rolls Series.[1] In expiation of the murder of Thomas à Becket, Henry II vowed to establish three religious houses. One of these was the Carthusian

[1] *Lib.* ii, Cap. XIII, pp. 92, 93. See, too, a paper by Canon Madge in the *Winchester Diocesan Chronicle* for March, 1910.

monastery of Witham, in Somersetshire. In the year 1175, Hugh of Avalon, procurator of the Great Chartreuse, was appointed prior ; and the great man, having completed the monastic buildings and organised the duties of the brotherhood, began to look about him for manuscripts, especially of the Holy Scriptures, which the brethren might copy. Prior Hugh, who from the first had won the warmest regards of the royal founder, was one day lamenting to his patron the dearth of manuscripts, when the King gave him ten marks wherewith to buy parchment, and promised that he himself would supply a copy of the Bible. Hearing that a splendidly illuminated copy had recently been made at Winchester, Henry begged the same on loan from the prior, and forthwith despatched it to Hugh at Witham. The brethren were delighted with the royal gift, never suspecting that it belonged to St. Swithun's monastery. At length the chance visit of a Winchester monk revealed the King's meanness, as well as the grief of the brethren of St. Swithun's at the loss of their treasure. Prior Hugh, with noble generosity and lofty principle on which the old chronicler enlarges, insisted upon returning the book

to Winchester, and at the request of the monks promised not to mention the matter to the King. And at Winchester the precious manuscript remains. How it escaped destruction at the Reformation, and again at the time of the Commonwealth, when Waller's troopers twice ransacked the Cathedral Library, and flung its treasures into the streets, cannot now be explained. Perhaps its splendid illuminations, being of a Biblical character, were regarded as not unedifying, and so the volume was allowed to remain at "Trinity Church" as the great Cathedral of St. Swithun was then called. The next notice we get of the priceless codex is in the notes of Beriah Botfield, the learned "investigator of the neglected contents of Cathedral Libraries" in the earlier half of the nineteenth century. In the chapter on the Library of Winchester, we meet with the following passage: "I am happy to notice the timely rescue of the noble manuscript of the Latin Vulgate Bible, in three imperial folio volumes, from the neglect by which it was for a long time suffered to lie unprotected in the church. It is written," he adds, "in the Roman character, apparently by an English hand, with large and beautiful

illuminations upon very fine vellum; and the three volumes are now appropriately bound in olive morocco, with gilt leaves, by the liberality of the late Dean."[1] We are grateful to Dean Rennell for the care he bestowed upon the most precious relic of the ancient scriptorium of St. Swithun's now remaining in the Cathedral Library, but we could have wished that the edges of the manuscript had not been pared and gilded, and that the two volumes had not been converted into three.

In gazing on these exquisite specimens of monastic art, such as the Winchester Vulgate and the Psalter of Henry de Blois, the wish sometimes arises that we knew the names of the scribes who thus dedicated their lives to the work of copying and illuminating manuscripts. Very seldom, however, is our curiosity gratified. Sometimes, indeed, as in the case of the *Benedictional* of St. Aethelwold, and of the *Historia* of Bede now in the Cathedral Library, the names of the writers have been preserved; but generally they are absolutely unknown. "However carefully," says the Abbot Gasquet,

[1] *Notes on the Cathedral Libraries of England* (1849), p. 468.

"we may examine the folios which come from some great writing school, such as Corbie, or Tours, or St. Albans, we shall in vain look for any indication of the names of those monks who have written them."[1] The individual was lost in the community. "The labourer toiled at his desk for a day, or a year, or a lifetime, knowing that if, when the pen dropped from his fingers the work was not completed, there would be another hand ready to carry it on to the desired end."[2]

So from generation to generation the work went steadily in the *Scriptorium* of St. Swithun's monastery. From the time of St. Aethelwold to the eve of the Reformation there were monks always busy in their private carrels or in the larger workroom. Sometimes a brother of greater literary ability would arise who devoted his time, not to copying manuscripts but to writing history. Such an one, for example, was Richard of Devizes, a native, no doubt, of Devizes, but a monk of St. Swithun's convent, in the time of Prior Robert at the close of the twelfth century. He wrote a chronicle of

[1] Gasquet's "Monastic Scriptorium" in *Old English Bible*, p. 44.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

the deeds of King Richard I. The story is told in a happy and facetious style, for Brother Richard had a pretty gift of humour. There is a copy of this chronicle, known as *Geista Ricardi*, in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and with it is bound up the *Annales de Wintonia*, which is thought by some authorities to be also the work of Richard of Devizes. In the middle of the fifteenth century our Winchester historian, Thomas Rudborne, flourished, from whose writings much of our knowledge with regard to the Cathedral and the diocese in mediaeval times is derived.

Just before the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, when the last prior, William Basynge, ruled the convent, the *armarius* or librarian, must have had a large number of manuscripts under his care. Indeed, it was probably one of the finest collections in the country. A few of the more valuable codices which were happily saved from the havoc wrought at the Reformation, we have had occasion to mention. A number of other manuscripts, once the property of St. Swithun's monastery, are to be seen in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, at Cambridge, at Rouen, and in other collections. There

was, too, a *Biblia glossata*, in two volumes, most valued on account of its annotations, which was, we learn, bequeathed to the Prior and Convent by Nicholas de Ely, Bishop of Winchester.[1] Several of the St. Swithun manuscripts are still in the possession of the Dean and Chapter, a sorry remnant of the once magnificent collection. The beautiful illuminated Vulgate remains with us, and the fine copy of Bede's *Historia*. Two manuscripts, one a work of St. Augustine on the fourth Gospel, and the other a commentary on the Psalms, each contain an entry in a fourteenth-century hand, to the effect that the volume belonged to the monastery :—"Iste liber est ecclesiae Sancti Swythini, Wynton." One other relic may be mentioned. It is a fine volume in perfect preservation, in the original oak boards covered with leather, and contains among other treatises, a copy of the scarce work *Promptorium Parvulorum*, which may be regarded as the first English-Latin dictionary. The interest of our copy is considerably enhanced by the fact that it was the property of Thomas Silkstede, one of the most

[1] F. J. Baigent "Crondal Records" (*Hants. Record Society*), p. 408.

distinguished priors of the monastery. His name appears on the fly-leaf at the beginning of the volume, and the date in Roman numerals, A.D. 1494. On the reverse of one of the fly-leaves at the end is also written: "Iste liber est de domo Sancti Swythini, Wynton," followed by the anathema frequently met with in mediaeval manuscripts: "Qui eum alienaverit anathema sit. Amen."

CHAPTER IV

AFTER THE REFORMATION

We wonder how the fine library of St. Swithun's Convent fared at the time of the dissolution. Were the treasures of the old Benedictine house handed over intact to the new Dean and Chapter of Winchester? or did the spoliation of the Library coincide with that of the Cathedral? Were the beautiful manuscripts allowed "to slumber in peace" for another century till the fanatical troopers of the Commonwealth plundered the muniment room? or did their dispersion date from the period of the Reformation? Was, for instance, to take a conspicuous example, the magnificent *Benedictional* of St. Aethelwold lost to Winchester at the time of the dissolution or at the time of the Commonwealth?

That at the Reformation the monastic libraries were in many cases wantonly destroyed is abundantly proved by overwhelming evidence. Indeed, the wholesale destruction of manuscripts is one of the saddest and most heartbreaking features of the

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English Reformation. "The English monks," says Thomas Fuller, "were bookish of themselves, and much inclined to hoard up monuments of learning";[1] and he goes on to tell us how John Bale, "a man sufficiently averse from the least shadow of popery, hating all monkery with a perfect hatred," had left on record his experience as to the scandalous way in which manuscripts were treated. They were put to every vile and common use. Some were "sold to the grocers and soap-sellers, and some were sent oversea to the book-binders, not in small number, but at times whole ships full." "I know a merchant-man," says John Bale, "who shall be nameless, that bought the contents of two noble libraries for forty shillings price; this stuff he hath occupied instead of gray paper, by the space of more than these ten years; and yet he hath store enough for as many years to come."[2] Well might Fuller exclaim:—

"What beautiful Bibles, rare Fathers, subtle Schoolmen, useful Historians, ancient, middle, modern; what painful comments were here amongst them! What monuments

[1] *Church History of Britain*, Book VI, Sec. iv, ch. iii, 1, p. 246.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 248.

of mathematics all massacred together ! seeing every book with a *cross* was condemned for popish, with *circles* for conjuring. Yea, I may say, that then holy divinity was profaned, physic itself hurt, and a trespass, yea, a riot committed on the law itself. And, more particularly, the history of former times then and there received a dangerous wound, whereof it halts at this day, and, without hope of a perfect cure, must go a cripple to the grave." [1]

How far this deliberate destruction of manuscripts took place at Winchester at the time of the Reformation there is no evidence to show. Dean Kitchin [2] was of opinion that inasmuch as the Prior became Dean, and some of the brethren were made " first and original " prebendaries, the manuscripts continued undisturbed in their possession, books and rolls alike ; and that they slumbered happily till the days of the Commonwealth. But indications are not wanting which conclusively show that the dispersion began at the Reformation. Seven service-books belonging to the Cathedral, " the outer parts of them being plates of

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 248.
[2] Introduction to *Obedientiary Rolls*, p. 1.

silver and gold, and the 'book of the four Evangelists,' written all with gold, and the outer side of plated gold" did not, we know, escape the notice of Thomas Crumwell. The spirit of ignorance and fanaticism which wilfully destroyed painted glass, and beautiful statues, fragments of which may be seen in the feretory, would not be likely to reverence illuminated manuscripts. And even if, at the actual time of the dissolution, the volumes, many of them with beautiful and costly covers, embellished with curious bosses and clasps, and perhaps in some instances with precious stones, escaped the attention of those "cruel cormorants, who, with their barbarous beaks and greedy claws, rent, tore, and tattered inestimable pieces of antiquity," the same good fortune could hardly have been the case when Bishop Ponet ruled the diocese, and a layman, Sir John Mason, Kt., was Dean of the Cathedral; or when, a few years later, Robert Horne became Bishop of Winchester. Of Horne it is recorded, that "he visited Winchester Cathedral and College, Magdalen, Corpus, Trinity, and New College, destroying the images, pictures, missals, painted glass, and other tokens of the religion and piety of his

ancestors, with a zeal as furious as it was ridiculous."[1]

But whatever havoc Bishop Horne may have wrought among the missals and service-books which he found at Winchester, the dispersion of the treasures of the ancient conventual library clearly began before his episcopate. Within a few years of the dissolution, several important St. Swithun's manuscripts came into the hands of one Thomas Dackcombe, who seems to have recovered them after they had been alienated from the library. His name may be seen on the fly-leaf of the so-called Ramsay *Benedictional*, on the Psalter reputed to have belonged to King Athelstan, and on two valuable Winchester cartularies both endorsed with the date "1550," now preserved, among other manuscripts acquired by him, in the British Museum. Indeed, in the opinion of Sir George Warner,[2] Thomas Dackcombe was the means of saving most of the surviving Winchester manuscripts. It is a point of interest that the evidence

[1] Anthony Wood's *Fasti*, Bliss' ed., vol. ii, col. 180, under 1567.

[2] Formerly Keeper of Manuscripts in the British Museum, to whom I am indebted for several particulars with regard to Dackcombe. See, too, his "Introduction" to *The Benedictional of St. Aethelwold*, pp. xxxii, xliii.

of the connection of the above-mentioned Psalter with Athelstan rests on an inscription in Dackcombe's handwriting on the first page: "Psalterium (sic) regis Ethelstan," followed by the date "1542." The statement, likely enough on internal evidence, was probably grounded on some early entry, known to Dackcombe, but now lost, on a fly-leaf or elsewhere, as in the case of other manuscripts given by Athelstan to various churches.

A few particulars about this interesting person, to whose scholarly instincts and love of ancient things we are so deeply indebted will be welcomed. Sir Thomas Dackcombe, or Daccombe, (for his name after the manner of the age is spelt in various ways), came of an old Dorset family, which in the time of Henry VI had settled at Iwerne Steepleton, near Blandford. He was instituted to the rectory of St. Peter's Colebrooke, in the city of Winchester, on 15th December, 1519, on the presentation of the abbess and convent of St. Mary's Abbey.[1] This living he resigned about the year 1533, when he was appointed to the vicarage of Nutley near Basingstoke.

[1] F. J. Baigent's *History of the Parish Church of Wyke*, pp. 15, 16 and note. To this excellent little booklet I am indebted for several details about Dackcombe.

He doubtless owed this preferment to the influence of his intimate friend, Dr. Nicholas Harpesfeld, a leading dignitary in the diocese of Winchester, whose uncle was the chief landowner in the parish of Nutley. This small country benefice he held till 1541, when he was reappointed to his former rectory of St. Peter's Colebrooke. It will be noticed that the date of his return coincides with that of the establishment of the Dean and Chapter of Winchester. Now in the "Boke of Portyons," dated 28th April, 1541, which is still preserved in the Cathedral Library, we have a list of the twelve original "petycanons." Among them, the last on the list, we find the name of "Thomas Dackhinson," a "secular priest." The other peticanons had evidently been monks, doubtless brethren of the dissolved monastery; otherwise the fact of Thomas Dackhinson being a secular or parish priest would hardly have been recorded. Now it may be taken as reasonably certain that this Thomas Dackhinson, "petycanon" of the Cathedral, is the same "secular priest" whom we know already as rector of St. Peter's Colebrooke. If so, the Vicar of Nutley returned to Winchester, not only as rector of his old parish,

but also as one of the first minor or petit canons of the new foundation. This fact will throw some light on his association with the Cathedral Library, of which it is not impossble that he acted as librarian. It is pleasant to think of this good and cultured man, at the time of great religious upheaval and fanaticism, quietly doing his duty as rector of a city church and as minor-canon of the Cathedral, and at the same time interesting himself in collecting mediaeval manuscripts which had been scattered abroad at the time of the dissolution. In addition to these occupations we also find him at this time ministering to the spiritual needs of a little body of nuns who had belonged to St. Mary's Abbey. When the convent had been dissolved, in 1540, a few of the inmates continued to live together in community, with Dame Elizabeth Shelly, the lady abbess, at their head; and Thomas Dackcombe, not unmindful of the kindness of those who in the days of their prosperity had presented him to his first living, acted towards them in the capacity of chaplain. In 1550 he lost his old friend, Dr. Nicholas Harpesfeld, who died on the 15th day of March at Wyke, where, in the

little church just outside the city he lies buried, with a quaint inscription suggestive of a mediaeval manuscript above his grave, written in all probability by Thomas Dackcombe. Dr. Harpesfeld bequeathed the sum of 40s. to his friend and neighbour, who had also witnessed his will, "Syr. Thomas Dackcombe, prest."

In the year 1549 "Syr Thomas" was presented to the rectory of Tarent-Gunvil, not far from Steepleton Iwerne, his ancestral home. He appears for a time to have held his Winchester living in conjunction with this benefice, for at a visitation held on 7th September, 1555, he was still rector of St. Peter's Colebrooke. It is interesting to notice that his passion for collecting did not desert him in his old age, for among the manuscripts preserved in the British Museum is one acquired by him in his Dorset retreat, with this endorsement, "Liber dni Thome Dackcomb 1557, rectoris de Tarant Gunevyll." Another volume printed on vellum which, according to Beriah Botfield,[1] would "do honour to any collection, however curious and however vast," was purchased by

[1] Botfield's *Notes on the Cathedral Libraries of England*, pp. 461, 462.

Dackcombe in 1563, of one John Avyngton, formerly a monk of St. Swithun's convent. This precious book, a copy of Johannes Latteburius, *In threnos Jeremie*, (Oxon. 1482), now reposes, as we learn from Botfield, in the library of Westminster Abbey. Thomas Dackcombe died in the year 1567 at Tarant-Gunvil, where part of the massive stone placed originally over his grave may now be seen built into the chancel wall on the outside of the church, which, with the exception of the tower, was entirely rebuilt in the year 1843. It is much to be regretted that this church, associated with the ministry of the last years of so scholarly and interesting a person, should, like that of St. Peter's Colebrooke, have been demolished. His name, however, written on many an ancient manuscript—on no less than eleven in the British Museum alone—will be sufficient to rescue from oblivion the memory of one, who, though in a humble ecclesiastical position, was yet the means of preserving from destruction many priceless examples of mediaeval art. The inscription on his memorial stone, to which we have alluded, now inserted, beneath the arms[1] of the Dackcombe family, on the

[1] On a chevron between three roses, three steeples.

south wall of the chancel, is so curious, and bears so striking a resemblance to that of Dr. Harpesfeld in the church of Wyke, and, moreover, seems to be so characteristic of a mind imbued with the hieroglyphic fancies of mediaeval writing, that we venture to quote it as the almost certain composition of Dackcombe himself. The stone is oblong, and the inscription which occupies four lines, runs thus :—

"HERE + LITIE + S + T + D + PARSON
AIL + FOWRE + BE + BVT + ONE
EARTHE + FLESCH + WORME + AD
BONE + M + CCCCC + LXVII";[1]

which is, being interpreted : "Here lieth Sir Thomas Dackcombe, Parson. All four be but one, earth, flesh, worm, and bone. 1567."

In the Injunctions of the Commissioners of Edward VI, issued in 1547 to all Deans, etc., of Cathedral Churches, of which the Winchester copy endorsed with the signature of Dean Kingsmill remains in the Library, the authorities are ordered "to make a librarie in some convenient place w'thin ther churche w'thin the space of one yere next ensuing." They are further instructed to "ley in the same" copies of certain of the Fathers, and of Erasmus and

[1] Hutchins' *History of Dorset*, vol. ii, p. 166.

other "goode writers woorks." The Dean and Chapter did not, it is clear, at once comply with these injunctions, for fourteen years later, at the Bishop's visitation in 1561, they are again ordered "within the months next followinge" to prepare "within the precincts of the sayde Cathedrall Churche a place both decent and convenient to make and erect a librarie, with both deskes and seates commodiouslie and husbandlie"; and further to furnish the same with books, towards which there shall be spent "on this syde the feast of the Nativitie of our Lord God" the sum of twenty pounds, to be followed by a "yeerlie expenditure of five marks." Whether the bishop was more successful than the Edwardian Commissioners had been in enforcing his injunctions on the Chapter we do not know; but some authorities have thought that the present Cathedral Library situated over the dark cloister between the wall of the south transept and the Norman Chapter-house, dates from this time. When, however, the bookcases were removed, in the course of repairs, a short time since, it was discovered that there were arched recesses in the thick masonry of the walls, some of which recesses had originally,

as was clear from the grooves in the stone-work, been fitted with doors and shelves; and that the walls in places were decorated with mediaeval frescoes. It was evident, therefore, that a room of some kind existed over the dark passage in pre-Reformation times. Moreover the east window, which lights the long, low room, bears on its mouldings, in addition to the arms of the Cathedral, the initials "T. S.," which stand for Thomas Silkstede, who was Prior of the monastery from 1498 to 1524. And though it is of course possible that this window originally occupied some other position, yet on the other hand it seems not unlikely that it was placed there by the great Prior, and that he himself arranged the room as a library to contain the splendid collection of illuminated manuscripts which was the pride and glory of St. Swithun's convent.

How far the Dean and Chapter carried out the Bishop's injunction to "spend yeerlie five marks" on the purchase of books, we cannot tell, but by degrees the collection grew larger. Now and again we find one or another of the prebendaries presenting a volume to the library. Indeed, several of our scanty number of codices

were added to the collection between the dissolution and the Commonwealth. Among the prebendaries was Dr. John Bridges, who was a benefactor in this way. For forty-five years he was prebendary of the Cathedral, and during the greater portion of that time he held his canonry in conjunction with the Deanery of Salisbury. Indeed, he did not resign his position at Winchester until six years after he had been consecrated Bishop of Oxford. He was a controversialist of some note, and one of his writings, a ponderous quarto of over 1,400 pages, was written in support of the government of the English Church against the attacks of Calvinistic writers such as Thomas Cartwright and Theodore Beza. The chief, indeed the only, interest attaching to this volume, entitled *A Defence of the Government established in the Church of Englande for Ecclesiasticall Matters*, lies in the fact that it was the immediate cause of the Martin Marprelate controversy. The first two of the Marprelate tracts are directed against this work, in one of which Dr. Bridges' literary style receives scathing criticism :—" A man might also run himselfe out of breath before he could come to a fullpoint in many places of your booke."

It does not appear that Dr. Bridges gave any of his polemical writings to the Cathedral, but three manuscripts presented by him may be seen in the library. One is a collection of historical and romantic works, written in Latin on vellum by a fourteenth-century hand, and includes the *Historia Britonum* by Geoffrey of Monmouth. This manuscript originally belonged to the Cathedral of Southwell. Another volume contains among other treatises, a "Life of St. Nicholas," and is embellished with large, ornamental capitals; while a third is a "Harmony of the Gospels," known as *Unum ex Quatuor*, written on vellum in the thirteenth century, with illuminated initials in red and blue.[1]

Long as was Dr. Bridges' connection with the Cathedral, it was exceeded by that of Dr. John Ebden, who held his canonry for the extraordinary period of fifty-two years. For a short time he was also Archdeacon of Winchester, but this position he doubtless found too onerous, for after a trial of only four years he resigned it. Dr. Ebden, like his contemporary Dr. Bridges, presented the

[1] These MSS. are now preserved in a glass case in the Library.

Cathedral with a manuscript volume which still remains in the Library, and also with an early printed commentary on the book of Exodus. The codex is a thirteenth-century writing, in double columns, with ornamental initials, and contains, in four books, a Compendium of Theology, but without title or author's name.[1]

Other members of the Chapter followed this good example, and sometimes no doubt the authorities would expend a few pounds in purchasing some printed books. And so by degrees, but not to any great extent, the collection increased in size and value. In 1639 we find Archbishop Laud, who was a great lover of learning, impressing upon the Chapter the need of improving their library, which was henceforth to be under the special charge and supervision of the Dean. Later on, after the downfall of the monarchy, we meet with a list of books which had formerly belonged to the Cathedral Library, and which must have been accumulating during this time. There is reason, therefore, to believe that before the year 1642 when the troopers of the Commonwealth ransacked the Cathedral, a goodly

[1] Also in the glass case.

collection of books, some in manuscript and some printed, some the property of the old Benedictine monastery—priceless illuminated codices, rescued, perhaps, by the faithfulness and assiduity of Sir Thomas Dackcombe—and some of more recent acquisition, were to be seen in the Library of Winchester Cathedral.

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CHAPTER V

AT THE COMMONWEALTH

At the time of the Commonwealth the Cathedral Library and muniment room were twice ransacked by the soldiers of the Parliament. The story of these raids is to be found in nearly all contemporary records; and, fortunately, the good chapter-clerk, Mr. John Chase, has left us, in a paper folio of some hundred leaves still preserved among the Cathedral documents, an account of his persistent efforts to recover some of the charters and records dispersed at the time.

The first raid occurred in the year 1642. Of this we have an account in a curious book, entitled *Mercurius Rusticus*, written by a strong Royalist, one Bruno Ryves. From this book we get a graphic picture, drawn, it must be remembered, by a strongly partisan hand, of "the sacrileges, prophanations, and plunderings committed by the schismatiques" in the Close and Cathedral of Winchester. It appears that a force of Parliamentary soldiers, under Sir William Waller, "sate down" before the city of Winchester on Tuesday, 12th December, 1642,

about twelve of the clock. That same afternoon, between the hours of two and three, they entered the city, and instantly fell upon the Close, under pretence of searching for Cavaliers. "They seize upon the Prebends' horses, and demand their persons with many threatening words: that night they break into some of the Prebends' houses, and plundered their goods." On the following day, the Castle having in the meanwhile surrendered, they spent the time in pillaging the town, but chiefly, as we learn from another source, "some Papists' houses, and the sweet Cathedralists, in whose houses and studies they found great store of popish books, pictures, and crucifixes, which the Soulders carried up and down the streets and market-place in triumph, to make themselves merry." But on Thursday morning, 14th December, between nine and ten of the clock ("hours set apart for better imployments," that is for divine service), the great pillage began. The soldiers violently broke open the great western doors of the Cathedral, and entered the church "with Colours flying, their Drums beating, their Matches fired." A troop of horse accompanied them on their march, and rode up through the

body of the church and quire, until they came to the altar, where "they begin their work." "They rudely pluck down the table and break the rail, and afterwards carrying it to an alehouse, they set it on fire, and on that fire burn the Books of Common Prayer, and all the singing-books belonging to the quire. They throw down the organ and break the stories of the Old and New Testament, curiously cut out in carved work, and beautified with colours." From thence they turn to the monuments of the dead: some they utterly demolish, others they deface. The chests or coffers on the north side of Bishop Fox's screen, which contained the remains of Saxon Kings and bishops, they throw to the ground, scattering the bones all over the pavement of the church; and then proceed to destroying the painted windows of the quire by flinging at them "the bones of Kings, Queens, bishops, confessors and saints, so that the spoil done on the windows will not be repaired for a thousand pounds." Having destroyed most of the beautiful painted glass, the soldiers "seize upon all the Communion Plate, the Bibles, and service-books, rich hangings, large cushions of velvet, all the Pulpit Clothes,

some whereof were of Cloth of Silver, some of Cloth of Gold." They then "break up the Muniment house, and take away the common Seal of the church, supposing it to be of silver: they tear the Evidences of their Lands, and cancel their Charter." Being at length satiated with the work of destruction, the troopers, "clad in surplices, and with such hoods and tippets as they found," rode through the streets, carrying broken organ pipes and mangled pieces of carved woodwork in their hands, that the citizens might see "how glorious a victory they had won."[1]

The above account gives hardly an adequate impression of the havoc wrought by the soldiery among the manuscripts in the muniment room. Charters, deeds, and records of all kinds were, as we learn from the "memoranda"[2] of John Chase, strewed about the Cathedral and city. Some were burnt, some were flung into the river, some into the gutters. The good Chapter-clerk quickly got to work to rescue his treasures, and to reduce to some sort of order the

[1] *Mercurius Rusticus* (1685), pp. 144-152.

[2] Partly printed in "Cathedral Documents (*Hants. Record Society*), vol ii, pp 57-64. See, too, "Introduction" to the volume, pp. xx, xxiv.

condition of chaos that prevailed. A large number of scattered documents he recovered "by persuasion or purchase," including many Saxon charters and writings relative to the Chapter estates, which he carefully arranged in separate boxes. His memoranda clearly indicate the vast amount of labour expended on the work, which he had only just completed when the second and overwhelming disaster occurred. On 1st and 2nd October, 1646, Oliver Cromwell being in command of the Parliamentary forces, another pillage at the Cathedral and muniment room took place, even more disastrous than the previous one. "Divers Charters were burnt, divers throwen into the River, divers large parchments being made Kytes withall to flie in the aire, and many other old books lost, to the utter spoyling and destruction of the muniment and chapter-house." It might well be thought that the spirit of John Chase was well-nigh broken at this second catastrophe; his labour during the last three years had been "labour in vain"; charters and manuscripts under his care were again scattered to the winds. But once more with undiminished energy he set to work to recover his lost treasures, and to

re-arrange the surviving manuscripts. We still possess his "remembrance" of such "books, accompts, rolls, writings, and muniments as I found again after the Muniment House was the second time broken up by the soldiers, and the writings carried away and imbeziled, 1646." He gives us a list, occupying fourteen pages, of documents which at this time he "found and got into his custody again." Some of these had, as we are told, "an almost romantic escape." A very fine charter of the time of Henry IV, still happily in the Cathedral Library, was given him by "Tupper the butcher, who found it all soyled in the gutter of Winchester High Street." Another charter, much "eaten by rats," was given him by the same person. "A bundle of divers counterpartes of leases which were throwen in the river," were fortunately "taken up about St. Crosses forth of the river by Giles King, a brother of St. Cross,"[1] and presented by him to the Chapter-clerk, who also recovered the two Saxon charters still remaining in the Cathedral Library.

A comparison of the ancient documents now in the keeping of the Dean and Chapter

[1] *Cathedral Documents*, ii, p. 28.

with the list made by Chase of those surviving the first pillage in 1642, will show how grievously the Library suffered in this second raid of 1646. Many of the Saxon charters and mediaeval cartularies which then existed in the Library are now lost to Winchester, though some of them may be seen in the British Museum and elsewhere. How far the books suffered with the deeds and muniments does not clearly appear; but Chase expressly mentions "many old books" as "lost in the pillage"; and it is possible that the *Benedictional* of St. Aethelwold, the *Psalter* of Henry de Blois, the *Tropary* of Ethelred, and other priceless manuscripts were lost on this occasion. Such books and codices as remained, including the Latin Bible *cum picturis* in two volumes, the *Historia* of Bede, and other mediaeval volumes, the whole valued by "Brother Ellis, one of the ministers," and Warden Harris of Winchester College, at the sum of 200s., were sequestered by order of Parliament, and assigned to "the use of ministers" in the city.[1] It appears, however, that the whole collection was seized by one Thomas Matthews a grocer, and Augustus

[1] See *Cathedral Documents*, vol. ii, pp. 72-74.

Garland, M.P., who claimed that they had "bought the Close at Winchester with the Library and books," which latter they forthwith removed to London in order to dispose of them to better advantage. The matter created some excitement, and eventually came before the Parliamentary Committee. Thomas Matthews, the grocer, having died within a few weeks of the scandalous transaction, Mr. Garland was called upon to "restore the books or show cause why they were taken away." Three months passed by, and no answer having been vouchsafed, the Secretary of the Parliamentary Committee wrote again: "We renew our request for a speedy answer to our letter about the Books of the Dean and Chapter said to be purchased by you." Whether this further communication received any attention is not recorded; but three weeks later, on Thursday, 27th May, 1652, a Parliamentary Order was made that "the books and manuscripts late belonging to the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Winchester be sent down to the Library of Winchester College, there to remain for publick use"; and further it was ordered that an examination be made by the Committee of Hampshire as to "who

hath imbezzled the said books and manuscripts," and that care should be taken that "they be inventoried and carried to the said Library of Winchester College." An examination of the College Register shows that this arrangement was carried out, and that before the end of the year some fifteen manuscripts and nearly 200 volumes of printed books, the property of the late Dean and Chapter, were brought from London to Winchester, at a cost of £3, and deposited in the College Library.[1] We learn further, from the same source, that the matter was arranged at the instance of Nicholas Love, the chief Parliamentarian authority at Winchester, who prevailed upon Oliver Cromwell, "Protector Reipublicae Angliae," to present for a very trifling consideration, the residue of the Cathedral Library to Winchester College. This astonishing transaction marks the final stage in the dispersion of the ancient Library which had gradually grown up since the days of St. Aethelwold in the tenth century. Rifled by rapacious hands at the time of the Reformation, plundered by still more violent methods in the days of the Civil War, the

[1] Kirby's *Annals of Winchester College*, p. 345.

heartrending work was at length completed by handing over the miserable remnant of books and manuscripts to the custody of Winchester College.

Most of these manuscripts and printed books, eventually found their way back to the Cathedral Library, as we shall notice in the next chapter, and these scanty remains are all that are left to us of a once magnificent collection. And their preservation is in a great measure due to the zeal and faithfulness of John Chase the Chapter-clerk, whose notes and memoranda clearly indicate how lovingly he had cared for the ancient documents under his care.

We would fain know more of this excellent man, but it is only possible to glean a few scanty particulars of his career.[1] He was the son of Richard Chase, of Liphook, in the county of Hants., and he married one Elizabeth Woodford, by whom he had a family of two sons and two daughters; but the dates of his birth and marriage are alike unknown. He settled in Winchester, in the part of the city known as "the Soake," that is, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop

[1] For these I am mainly indebted to Canon Madge in Introduction to *Cathedral Documents*, vol. ii, pp. 19-21.

of Winchester, some time before 1620, in which year he was made "Bailiff of the Liberties of the Dean and Chapter in the County of Southampton," and two years later he was appointed Chapter-clerk. He seems to have celebrated his appointment by the purchase of a new Chapter-book, which begins with the General Chapter of 25th November, 1622, and closes with the dispersion of the Cathedral body in 1645. In this volume, which he kept in his possession during the period of the Commonwealth, he carefully noted down against the names of the prebendaries the dates of their decease as "one by one they passed away in their exile." The last death he entered is that of Dr. John Harris on 21st August, 1658, and since on the re-assembling of the Chapter in 1660 his name as Chapter-clerk does not appear, it may be reasonably inferred that he had died some time between these two dates, shortly before the Restoration. It is sad to think, as it has been said, that the poor man was thus denied the happiness of witnessing the return of the old order of things. He had hoped, too, that his son, "John Chase, junior," would in due course succeed him in his office of

Chapter-clerk, and, indeed, the Dean and Chapter, as appears from an entry in the Chapter-book, had virtually agreed to this arrangement; but the Civil War had intervened, and when the Chapter, after an interval of fifteen years, met again at the time of the Restoration, John Chase was dead, and his son seems to have left Winchester for London. Some ten years before, the Chapter-clerk had lost his wife, and he chronicles her interment in the choir of St. John's Church in the Soke, and a few months later that of his brother-in-law, who was buried "at the south end of the little hill or bed which lyeth nere the west door of Trinity Church."

And so, the exact date unknown, John Chase, the faithful servant of the Dean and Chapter during the troublous times of the Civil War, passed away to his rest, and was doubtless buried beside his wife in the chancel of St. John's Church. He deserves to be gratefully remembered. With Thomas Dackcombe, peticanon of the Cathedral in the days following the Reformation, he shares the honour of having preserved from destruction many ancient documents belonging to the Cathedral. What Dackcombe did in

[1] *Cathedral Documents*, ii, p. 21.

the way of collecting and preserving the scattered manuscripts of St. Swithun's priory, that John Chase did, with regard to the charters and muniments, at the disastrous time of the Civil War. The treasures still in existence are, indeed, but a sorry remnant of what once was a fine collection ; but such as they are, their preservation is due, in no small degree, to the zeal and intelligence of these two men, whose names at any rate we are privileged to know and reverence—"Syr Thomas Dackcombe" Rector of St. Peter's Colebrook and Minor Canon of the Cathedral, and "John Chase Gent" Chapter-clerk to the Dean and Chapter.

CHAPTER VI

BISHOP MORLEY'S LIBRARY

When, at the time of the Restoration, the surviving members of the Chapter of Winchester again entered the venerable precincts of the Close, they must have done so with strangely contradictory feelings. The Dean, Dr. Young, had passed away, and five out of the twelve prebendaries. Happy on the one hand at the turn public events had taken, and at being again, after fifteen years' banishment, in possession of their rights and dignities, yet the prospect that presented itself was enough to dismay the stoutest heart. The attempt to pull down the Cathedral had, indeed, happily failed, owing to the protests of the citizens—the original copy of the petition against "the destroyinge and pullinge downe of Trinitye Church" is still preserved in the library—but the sacred building was in a grievous condition of dilapidation. The Deanery and most of the Prebendal houses were in a state bordering on ruin—"4 out of 13 only left standing," states a contemporary document with perhaps a little pardonable exaggeration—and the

library, as we learn from the same source, was demolished.

The new Dean, Dr. Alexander Hyde, a cousin of Lord Chancellor Hyde afterwards Earl of Clarendon, was installed on 8th August, 1660, and with him two newly-appointed prebendaries; and a few days later, on Sunday, 19th August, Dr. Edward Stanley, one of the surviving prebendaries, preached the sermon in the nave of the Cathedral to commemorate the return of the Chapter. His sermon, dedicated to Bishop Morley, was printed, and a copy is preserved in the Cathedral Library. In it he thus happily refers to the return: "This is one of Christ's miracles, that He hath stilled the raging of the sea; that though we were unworthily cast out, yet we are met again, *in nave Ecclesiae;* and whether it be the Quire, or the Body of the Church, it matters not; but here we are by God's mercy, and the Ship itself is, we hope, secured; though much torn and ransack'd, as you see." Three weeks later, the first Chapter meeting of the new body was held, when, under the presidency of Dr. Hyde, a petition was drawn up to the King asking for a grant of money towards rebuilding

and repairing the Cathedral property, and also for an allowance of convenient timber —"Church timber having been so generally wasted and destroyed"—that they may "rebuild their demolished cloisters, library, and dwelling-houses."

The library here mentioned was probably the long low room over the dark cloister which runs between the south transept of the Cathedral and the old Norman Chapter-house. It is thus referred to in the Survey of the Close, made by the Parliamentary Commission in 1649: "Alsoe one faire Roome called the Library with some bookes in itt lyeing between the Howse lately belonginge to the Deane and the Cloysters built with stone, the Roofe covered with Lead, with a very faire payre of Stone Stayres leadinge out of the said Cloysters up to the said Library." This room, which still bears traces of mediaeval frescoes, and of arched recesses once used as a receptacle for books was perhaps fitted up by good Prior Silkstede, whose initials may be seen on the stone moulding of the east window, and was probably used as a library in pre-Reformation times. It was almost certainly the Cathedral Library in the days preceding

the Civil War. During the period of the Commonwealth the roof had doubtless been stripped for the sake of the lead valued at "twoe hundred and Twentye pounds sixteene shillings," and its timbers sold, as happened in the case of several of the prebendal houses, and the room presented a deplorable condition.

But not only was the library "demolished," but such manuscripts and books as had escaped the pillage that followed the Reformation were gone. The fine collection of illuminated manuscripts which had been the pride of the Benedictine monastery, had dwindled down to some fifteen or twenty codices, and these, together with a collection of printed books, valued at £200, had, as we have seen, been "imbezzled" during the period of the Commonwealth, and carried up to London. The books and manuscripts were at length, after much trouble, recovered, when, at the instance of Nicholas Love, the chief Parliamentary authority at Winchester, they were presented by Oliver Cromwell to Winchester College. The College, as the bursar's accounts clearly show,[1] bore the expense of removing the books "a

[1] Kirby's *Annals of Winchester College*, p. 345.

Londino ad Collegium," where they arrived early in the year 1653, and were duly incorporated in the library.

It was a heavy task that confronted the Dean and Chapter on their return to the Close in the autumn of 1660, and one that took several years to accomplish. "The first thing which was thought most necessary," as we learn from "the proceedings of the Dean and Chapter" still in existence, "was to rebuild the house of God, w^{ch} was done with all possible expedition to a very great expense of money, and in the next place to rebuild the deanery and the houses of those Prebendaries w^{ch} were totally demolisht." Considerable progress was made in the work by the end of the year 1667, when some £15,000 had been expended; but the library yet awaited restoration. Shortly before Christmas good Bishop Morley wrote to his "very loveing freinds the Dean and Chapter of Winchester," touching the "building and repayring of such of y^{r} howses as are yet unbuilt or want reparation." And he adds: "I wish you had a Library too, I mean a convenient Receptacle for such books as will probably from tyme to tyme be bestowed upon you. I am sure you are

likely to have all or most of mine, and I hope mine and your successors will follow mine and your example." In answer to this appeal the Chapter set about "rebuilding and repayring" the long room over the dark cloister, covering it with the sloping roof which we see to-day.

The work of restoration seems to have been completed by the end of 1670, but some years elapsed before the library was furnished with books. The sorry remnant of the old collection remained in the safe keeping of Winchester College; and Bishop Morley, in spite of his three score years and ten, continued to "rise about 5 o'clock in the morning, winter and summer, and to go to bed about 11 at night, and in the coldest mornings never to have a fire, or his bed warmed at night." Two years before his death the good Bishop, not unmindful of his promise to the Dean and Chapter, caused a catalogue of his books to be written on vellum, in a folio volume bound in calf, and presented to the Cathedral authorities, as appears from the following statement entered upon the last leaf of the catalogue itself:—

"Memorandum,—That this Catalogue of Bookes was presented to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, from the Right Reverend Father in God, George Lord Bishop of

Winchester, upon the 28th day of November, 1682, as being a Catalogue of all the Bookes in his Lordship's Library, bequeathed by his Lordship's Will to the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity of Winchester, and which the longer his Lordship lived, he declared by his letter should be the more and not the fewer : which Catalogue his Lordship appointed to be kept by the Treasurer for the time being, and the delivery of which is attested by us.

"WILLIAM DOUTHWAITE,
"THOMAS CRANLEY, Notary Public."

After the delivery of this catalogue into the safe keeping of the treasurer of the Cathedral, the Dean and Chapter had still some little time to wait before they obtained possession of the library. But towards the close of October, 1684, Thomas Ken, one of the prebendaries, was summoned from Winchester to Farnham to attend the Bishop's death-bed. The end came "about three o'clock in the morning of the 29th of October, when the most worthy and pious bishop surrendered up his soul to God in Farnham Castle," doubtless in the tiny bedroom under the staircase of Fox's tower, "in the 80th year of his age." Only a few months before his death Morley's dear friend, Izaak Walton, had passed away at the patriarchal age of "full ninety years and past," and had been buried in Prior Silkstede's chapel in Winchester Cathedral. And as the two friends had been "lovely and pleasant" together

in their lives, so "in their death they were not divided," for a few days after his decease the body of Bishop Morley was conveyed from Farnham to Winchester, where it was laid to rest in the nave of his great Cathedral, at the foot of the steps leading to the choir on the north side, opposite the tomb of Bishop Edyngdon.

Shortly after the bishop's death his books were removed to the long room over the dark cloister known henceforth as Bishop Morley's Library. And with the books were transferred the oaken presses or bookcases which contained them. At least, tradition has always associated the bookshelves as well as the books with the gift of this munificent prelate. And a close inspection of the bookcases lends abundant confirmation to the tradition. They are of dark oak, with curiously carved cornices, ornamented with knobs and pinnacles, after the style of the seventeenth century. And that they were made originally for another room, and have been adapted to their present position, is evident from several considerations. On the original cornice of the oak panelling which now covers the walls of the window-recesses may be seen the labels which

Photo by *W. T. Green, Winchester*

THE MORLEY LIBRARY

formerly indicated the number of the shelves beneath. When the cornice was adapted to the panelling, the labels were not removed and may easily be distinguished. The supply of moulding, too, was not sufficient to go entirely round the walls, and in several places material of another design had to be employed. The pinnacles, again, especially in the window-recesses, were too high for the low ceiling, and some of the spikes had to be shortened or removed. Tradition, therefore, is probably right; and the bookcases, enriched at the four corners with the arms of the diocese, doubtless once ornamented the library of the good bishop.

An examination of the official catalogue, made in 1682, reveals the nature and extent of Bishop Morley's gift. It consisted of nearly two thousand volumes, bound for the most part in sombre calf or in antique vellum, and protected in some cases with iron clasps and bands. Of the two thousand volumes, nearly 700 were in folio, 500 in quarto, and the rest in octavo or duodecimo; with some twenty-four bound volumes of pamphlets. More than half the volumes were in the Latin tongue, a few in Greek and in Hebrew, nearly 150 in French or Italian, and about

700 in English. The library represented just such a collection of books as we should associate with a wealthy high-church scholar and divine, of strong royalist opinions, in the second half of the seventeenth century. The classics in fine folio editions are well represented. There are excellent copies of the Greek and Latin Fathers, mostly in folio, and bound in calf. As became an ardent royalist and a strong supporter of the House of Stuart, there are the works of King James I, and of " King Charles the Martyr " in two folio volumes. The residence of Morley on the continent during the period of the Commonwealth is illustrated, not only by the inclusion in his library of the works of his foreign friends Samuel Bochart and Claude Salmasius the antagonist of Milton, but also by his collection of French and Italian books. Among the latter there is a copy of the sermons of Savonarola, but there is no evidence of an interest in Dante.

Of Reformation theology there is an abundant display, including the works of Erasmus, of Martin Luther, and of Melancthon. But it is chiefly in English controversial literature that the library of Bishop Morley is richest and most representative. A large

number of these writings are now entirely obsolete; but the library contains an excellent collection of the works of the seventeenth-century divines. To mention but a few of the better-known and more interesting volumes, there are fine folio copies of Archbishop Laud's famous *Conference* with Fisher, of Jewell's *Apology for the Church of England*, of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, and of Pearson's *Exposition of the Creed*. There are the works of Bishop Morley's old friends, fellow-canons of Christ Church, Dr. Hammond and Dr. Sanderson; also of Bishop Andrewes, of Archbishop Ussher, and of Dr. Donne. Of the latitudinarian divines, while the great work of Chillingworth on *The Religion of Protestants* is absent, the school is well represented by the *Rational Account of the Protestant Religion* of Edward Stillingfleet, by the famous sermons of Tillotson, and by the *Golden Remains of the ever memorable Mr. John Hales of Eton College*. The Cambridge school of Christian Platonists is excellently represented by the works of John Smith, of Ralph Cudworth, and of Henry More. No fewer than nineteen volumes of Richard Baxter's controversial writings are to be found in the

library, but, strange to say, his most enduring monument, *The Saint's Rest*, is wanting. We should have expected among the works on ecclesiastical history, which include Burnet's *History of the Reformation* and Peter Heylin's volume on the same subject, the more celebrated *Church History of Britain* by the immortal Fuller, but this, too, is absent. It is also curious that George Herbert is only represented by his prose work, *A Priest to the Temple*, and that no copy of his more famous poems is to be found among the Bishop's books. But poetry, it is clear, did not appeal to the theological instincts of our good prelate. His library of two thousand volumes contains only a few examples of the English poets. There is a folio copy of Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, and also an edition of Butler's *Hudibras*, and a first edition of the poems of Dr. Donne. Shakespeare is absent, and Herrick, and Wither, and Quarles, and Crashaw, and Henry Vaughan. But as if in some measure to make up for this deficiency, the Bishop possessed a copy of the first edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

It is interesting to find copies of Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*, of Burnet's *Life of*

Sir Matthew Hale, and of John Seldon's *History of Tithes*; while the collection of pamphlets contains the famous tracts on the Smectymnus controversy. One or two omissions in the Bishop's collection of books is certainly curious. There was no copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* in his library. Theological prejudice cannot account for its absence, for Morley possessed works of Baxter and John Owen, and William Penn, and other Nonconformists. But stranger still is the fact that no copy of Ken's *Manual of Prayers*, or of Izaak Walton's *Compleat Angler*, was to be found among the Bishop's books. Ken was Morley's chaplain and one of his most trusted friends, while with Izaak Walton the Bishop had been for many years on terms of the closest intimacy. His library, it is true, possessed copies of Walton's *Lives* (now lost), and also of his last work, the *Life of Dr. Robert Sanderson*, which, dedicated to his old friend Bishop Morley, he published in his eighty-fifth year; but there was no copy of his more famous work, which, as Charles Lamb said of it in after days, "would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it." Fishing, it may be, was taken to be akin to poetry, being a "contemplative

man's recreation" ; and poetry, as we have seen, found no response in the heart of Bishop Morley.

It will be noticed that in his letter to the Dean and Chapter the good Bishop had promised that the longer he lived the number of books he bequeathed to the Cathedral Library should be "the more and not the fewer." This promise was clearly carried out ; and when, shortly after the Bishop's death, his executors handed over to the Chapter the Morley Library, they included "the more books" which had accumulated between the delivery of the catalogue in 1682 and the Bishop's death two years later. These additional volumes were duly entered in the Bishop's official catalogue, which seems to have been the only catalogue in use for many subsequent years. The Dean and Chapter were doubtless gratified with their new possession, and it must have been a matter of some congratulation that at length the old bookroom, associated with the name of Prior Silkstede, was once again fitted with presses and furnished with a library of at least two thousand volumes.

The Bishop had expressed the hope that other people might be found to follow his

example and to present books to the Cathedral Library. Perhaps the first to do so was his friend and chaplain, Thomas Ken, who within a few weeks of the Bishop's death, and indeed in consequence of it, was promoted to the bishopric of Bath and Wells. In commemoratoin of that event he presented to the library a few folio volumes, bound in calf, which still remain.

The gift of Thomas Ken, following on that of Bishop Morley, must have reminded the Chapter of that collection of books and manuscripts, the property of the Cathedral, which at the instigation of Nicholas Love had been made over by Oliver Cromwell to Winchester College. It had been a most scandalous proceeding, and the College authorities were doubtless not well pleased with it. At any rate, an effort has been made, but unsuccessfully, to erase the record of it from the College Catalogue. Now a few months before Morley's death a canonry of the Cathedral had fallen vacant, and the Bishop had appointed Dr. John Nicholas, Warden of the College. John Nicholas had been an old school-fellow of Thomas Ken—they were admitted scholars at the same time, and they had been up at New College

together—and for a few months they were fellow-canons of Winchester Cathedral. The subject of the old Cathedral Library must have been discussed between them. It was, of course, a delicate matter, and one not lightly to be brought forward. However, within a few months Ken left Winchester for Wells, and Warden Nicholas, busy with his new Schoolroom and with his prebendal house in the Close, had more than enough to occupy his energies. But a few years later, in 1695, it came about that Dr. William Harris, Head Master of Winchester College, was also appointed Canon of the Cathedral; and thus the Warden and the Informator were on the Chapter together. The opportunity had now come, and we are inclined to venture the opinion that it was during the time when Dr. Nicholas and Dr. Harris were canons together, *viz.*, between the years 1695 and 1700, that the manuscripts and books were returned to the Cathedral Library.

That the great majority of those literary treasures have been restored is no longer a matter of conjecture. With regard to the manuscripts, some fifteen in number, it has long been recognised that, although the time

and circumstances of their return is unknown, they now repose in the Cathedral Library. One single codex remains at College, a concordance or canon of the Gospels with notes and index, on the fly-leaf of which is written the following memorandum : " This beautiful MS., the most superbly embellished one of the College to which it belongs, is not only defective at the beginning and at the end, but in very many other parts, and most of the illuminated letters have been cut out. It belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester, and is one of the valuable MSS. which, with a quantity of books, belonging to the Dean and Chapter, Oliver Cromwell allowed the College to acquire in 1653, when the Dean and Chapter were suppressed. There is a tradition that the illuminated letters were cut out by former College porters and given to visitors ; but it seems more likely that the MS. suffered mutilation while it was in the custody of the Dean and Chapter." We need not discuss the question of mutilation : it is sufficient to note that while the College retains this one beautiful Codex the rest of the manuscripts were duly returned to the Dean and Chapter, and now safely repose in the Cathedral Library.

With regard to "the quantity of printed books belonging to the Dean and Chapter," considerable obscurity as to their fate existed until quite recently. It seems to have been generally supposed that most of them at any rate remained in the possession of Winchester College. The supposition is wrong. My investigations have conclusively proved that when the MSS. were returned to the Dean and Chapter, the printed books were returned with them. Of the 124 works contained in the 176 volumes which Oliver Cromwell made over to Winchester College in the year 1653, the great majority are now to be found in the Cathedral Library. It has been found impossible, partly owing to bad writing and faded ink, and partly to inadequate description, to trace the whole of the volumes, but there can be little doubt that all the books that could be identified as belonging to the Cathedral were honourably returned by the College authorities. When the volumes were restored the Cathedral librarian entered their titles as far as possible in their right alphabetical position in the Morley Catalogue, which, as we have seen, was used for many years as the general catalogue of the library. After much painstaking

labour, a little more than two-thirds of the printed books have been satisfactorily identified. With regard to the remaining third, some, it seems to be clear from an examination of the College Catalogue, could not be traced at the time of transference; while others, owing to partial or inaccurate description, can no longer be identified. It is probable, however, that most of these are reposing with their fellows on the shelves of the Morley Library.

It is pleasant, therefore, to know that, as at Lambeth so at Winchester, the volumes which had been alienated at the time of the Commonwealth eventually found their way back to their old home. By the close of the seventeenth century—150 years after the pillage at the era of the Reformation, and fifty years after that of the Commonwealth—we may think of St. Swithun's library as again containing a respectable number of books. Bishop Morley's munificent gift formed the bulk of the collection. In addition to this there were a dozen or more illuminated manuscripts most of which had belonged to the old Benedictine monastery, nearly 200 volumes which had accumulated between the establishment of the Dean and Chapter in 1541 and the Civil War, and a few books given by private individuals.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE LIBRARY

ANY account of the literary associations of Winchester, which run back to the days of King Alfred and the Saxon Chronicle, would be incomplete without a brief indication of a few of the more interesting books now to be seen in the Cathedral Library.[1]

With regard to the MSS., the fine collection once sheltered within the walls of St. Swithun's Priory was, as we have seen, grievously dispersed at the time of the Reformation, and again during the troubles of the Civil War. Putting aside charters and cartularies, there are now only seventeen MSS. remaining in the library, and of these several have been given since the dissolution of the monastery.[2] The illuminated Vulgate is beyond question our most priceless possession, and is indeed a codex of almost priceless value. The Bede, too, is an interesting

[1] It will of course be understood that I have mentioned but a very few of our more interesting volumes, and those by way only of illustrating various aspects of bibliography.

[2] See pp. 225, 226.

copy, not only on account of its early date and marginal notes, but because it was written at Winchester and was once the property of the convent. This latter reason gives additional interest to the copy of St. Augustine on the Fourth Gospel; and to the collection of treatises bound up together in the original oak boards, presented to the library by good Prior Silkstede.[1]

There is a special interest attaching to early printed books, especially to those which appeared before the year 1500, commonly known as *Incunabula*. Of these we have unfortunately only a few examples in the Library. Our earliest printed book is a copy of the Homilies of St. Chrysostom,[2] printed at Brussels in 1479 by the "Brothers of the Common Life."[3] The good brethren, who had been celebrated for their work of copying manuscripts, set up a printing-press at their house called "Nazareth" in the year 1476; so our volume was one of their early issues. Like most printed books of the period it bears a strong resemblance to a manuscript. The wide margins, the curious

[1] p. 209.
[2] Now preserved in a glass case.
[3] See Putnam's *Books and their Makers*, vol. i, pp. 88-90. *Early Printed Books*, E. G. Duff, pp. 107-108.

type, the initial letters in black and red ink, combine to give it a strangely mediaeval appearance; while, in common with many early books it contains no title-page, the sheets are unnumbered, and it possesses a colophon at the end of the volume which gives the date of printing and other particulars. Another volume in our scanty collection of *Incunabula* is a fine folio, which has unfortunately been rebound, of the works of the learned and pious Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris and Canon of Notre Dame. This book,[1] which was printed at Paris in 1489, has manuscript initials in green and red, and contains a colophon but no title-page. An interesting Latin entry on the reverse side of a full-paged engraving placed at the beginning of the volume, reveals the fact that the book once belonged to "the sisters of St. Agnes' Convent, *in Lothem*."

There are several early-printed Sarum Missals in the Library. One of these,[2] a small folio in black letter, printed, as we learn from the colophon, at Paris, in the year 1500 by the celebrated printers Higman and Hopylius, shows on the title-page a

[1] Shelf number, xxxii, A, 4. [2] In a glass case.

curious woodcut known as St. Gregory's Pity. The same woodcut also appears on another page, and beneath it a blank shield for the insertion of the name or arms of the owner. But the illumination, intended to have been done by hand, had never been carried out. The volume also contains, as is not infrequently the case, a full-paged engraving of the Crucifixion before the Canon of the Mass. Another copy[1] of the Sarum Missal, issued by the same house in 1510, has the first page of the Canon of the Mass printed on vellum. This portion of the service book, being the most frequently used, would naturally wear out sooner than the rest of the volume; hence the custom sometimes adopted of printing it on vellum. Our copy, which is enriched with many woodcuts, formerly belonged to one Barthelemy Hussey, perhaps a monk of St. Swithun's Convent, whose name appears in several places. We also meet with the following pathetic entry, scribbled on the margin of one of the pages, in the year before the death of King Henry VIII: "I praye God," writes poor Barthelemy, "I may lyve to see the Masse to be saide again, for that to

[1] In a glass case.

see hit wolde glade my harte so much as any thinge in this worlde."

From Roman Missals we turn not unnaturally to English Prayer-books; and it is noteworthy to find that the Library possesses original editions of the two Prayer-books of Edward VI, and also the Winchester copy of the sealed Prayer-book of Charles II.[1] The Prayer-books of 1549 and of 1552 are works of considerable commercial value, and of great doctrinal interest, and most instructive is it to compare the differences between the two editions. In both will be found the following petition, now happily removed from the English Litany:—"From the tyrannie of the bishoppe of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, Good Lorde deliver us." The sealed copy of the 1662 Prayer-book does not contain the strange service used at "The Healing," or touching for the king's-evil; but in an edition,[2] published at Oxford in 1721, and lately presented to the Library, it will be found immediately before the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

Of English versions of the Bible we possess a copy of The Bishops' Bible,[3] printed by

[1] In glass case.
[2] Shelf number, xlii, F. 7.
[3] xviii, c. 4.

Christopher Barker in 1585, and containing Archbishop Cranmer's Preface. This massive folio is sometimes known as "the treacle Bible" because of the quaint rendering in Jeremiah x. 22, "Is there not tryacle at Gilead; is there no Physician there?" There is also a copy, in handy octavo, of the Geneva or "Breeches" (Gen. iii. 7) Bible,[1] printed in London in 1606. It is in the original binding, with brass bosses and remains of clasps, and contains the Apocrypha and Sternhold and Hopkins' metrical version of the Psalms. There is also an edition of Dr. Fulke's New Testament[2] published at Rheims. But our most valuable printed book is the copy of John Eliot's translation of the Bible into the Indian language, which was printed at "Cambridge in New England" in 1663, and dedicated to Charles II. This was the first Bible printed in America, and is now a very scarce book.[3]

Of other seventeenth-century volumes one or two call for special mention. Not the least important, to judge from its influence on English history, was the *Eikon Basilike*, "a Portraiture of His sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings," generally supposed

[1] ii, A. 10. [2] ii, D. 5. [3] In glass case.

to have been written by King Charles I, but almost certainly the work of Dr. John Gauden, one of his chaplains.[1] No less than forty-seven editions of this book were issued with surprising rapidity. Of these we have copies of three editions in the Library. One of these is a first edition, printed in 1648;[2] and another the Latin translation made by John Earles and published at the Hague in the following year.[3] A copy of the first edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*[4] is among the treasures of the Library. The first edition of this immortal poem is distinguished by no less than eight different title-pages, according to the time of issue between the years 1667–1669. The whole edition was printed off in 1667, but the sale proving slow, the publisher adopted the unusual expedient of issuing only a limited number at a time, furnishing each batch with a fresh title-page.[5] Our copy is dated 1669, and belongs, therefore, to the seventh or eighth issue. An original edition of Dr. Donne's *Poems*,[6]

[1] See *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. vii, p. 161.
[2] In glass case.
[3] xxvi, F. 3.
[4] In glass case.
[5] *How to Collect Books*, by J. H. Slater, p. 69.
[6] xxviii, D. 24.

published after his death, will be viewed with interest by those who venerate the memory of the great Dean of St. Paul's. First editions of the three parts of Butler's *Hudibras*[1] also rest upon our shelves.

It is interesting to find in a library almost wholly theological several works dealing with science and natural history. There is a first edition of Fuchs' magnificent Herbal, *De Historia stirpium*,[2] published at Basle in 1542. The full-paged woodcuts, which have been coloured by hand, are of exceptional merit, and render the Herbal perhaps the most beautiful ever produced. In our copy the title-page is most unfortunately missing, but the named portraits of the draughtsmen who assisted Fuchs in his great work will be found at the end of the volume. We also possess magnificent folios of Gesner's famous *Historia Animalium*[3] in three volumes, printed by C. Froschover at Zurich, between the years 1551 and 1558. The beautiful woodcuts, like those in Fuchs' Herbal, were printed in outline, the work of colouring being purposely left to the rubricator. It is interesting to notice that in our copy some of the drawings have been painted,

[1] xxviii, F. 30. [2] xix, B. 2. [3] xix, C. 2.

and some left in their original condition. Of English books on natural history none is more famous than Gilbert White's *Selborne*, which appeared in 1789. A fine copy of the first edition, in quarto, reposes in our Library.[1]

The vast majority of our earlier books are works of Theology—ponderous folios of the Fathers, and of the Reformation divines, with numerous works on religious controversy. The chief interest associated with many of these volumes is to be sought, not so much in their subject-matter, as in the printing-presses from which the works emanated. Among the early presses justly regarded as celebrated, are those of the "Brothers of the Common Life," the Aldine Press at Venice, the Elzevir Press, the Plantin Press at Antwerp, and the Ascension Press at Paris. Of books printed in these famous presses we are fortunate in possessing several examples. The beautiful copy of the Homilies of St. Chrysostom, printed at Brussels by the Order of the "Brothers of the Common Life," has already been mentioned. The Aldine Press, founded at Venice in 1495, became celebrated for its splendid editions of the

[1] lii, D. 1, see p. 59.

classics. A folio copy of Suidas' *Greek Lexicon*,[1] printed by Aldus the Elder in 1514, and bearing on the title-page his well-known mark of an anchor entwined by a dolphin, may be seen in our Library; and also an edition of *Livy*,[2] printed by Aldus the Younger in 1555, showing the Aldine anchor surrounded by an oval border as adopted in that year. There are several productions of the Elzevir Press. One beautiful little book[3] in the original vellum binding with overlapping edges, shows on the title-page the famous mark of the house known as "The Old Sage," and is further of interest as affording an example of the peculiar form of numeration, sometimes adopted in the seventeenth century, known as the inverted "C." The Plantin Press of Antwerp is well represented on our shelves. As examples we may cite a quarto edition of the Hebrew Bible[4] printed in 1566, and a very fine folio copy of the Roman Missal[5] printed by Christopher Plantin in 1574. In the early years of the sixteenth century the Ascension Press in Paris became one of the most celebrated in Europe. It was founded by

[1] xviii, D. 2.
[2] xxi, D. 8.
[3] xxvi, E. 1.
[4] ii, A. 3.
[5] xxxiii, E. 3.

Jodscus Badius Ascensius, a man of great learning, and at one time Professor of Humanity at Lyons, and press-corrector to Trechsel the famous printer. Of Trechsel's work we have a specimen in the *Dialogues of Occham,*[1] printed in 1495; while of the Ascension Press there is a massive folio, in the original oak boards covered with leather and with the iron clasps remaining, of the works of Bruno,[2] patriarch of the Carthusians at Paris. On the title-page there is an engraving of the famous Ascension printing-press, with the date 1520. At the end of the volume we have a "Life of Bruno," illustrated by a number of woodcuts, in which the saint is usually represented with the name "Bruno" engraved beneath his figure. Another production from the same house, giving in the colophone the date 1519, also shows the printing-press on the title-page.

Of early English presses, those of Caxton, Wynkyn de Worde, "the schoolmaster of St. Albans," John Lettou, and William de Machlinia, we have no examples in our Library. We are happy, however, in possessing a few leaves printed by Richard Pynson in 1504. They are to be found at

[1] In glass case. [2] iv, B. 1.

the end of our Sarum Missal[1] printed by Higman and Hopylius at Paris in 1500, and possess a colophon stating that they were printed in "fletestrete signo sancti Geoi gii, 10 Kal., Jan. 1504," together with the Pynson device, consisting of his initials cut in wood, so as to print white on a black background.

It was often the custom, among the printers of the sixteenth century, to utilise old manuscripts and sheets of early printed books as materials for binding. After the Reformation, service-books were largely used for this purpose; while no less than 10 per cent. of the books printed in England before 1530 are only known to us through fragments rescued from bindings.[2] Of this lamentable practice we have several illustrations in our Library. The boards of our copy of Fuchs' Herbal,[3] printed in 1542, are lined with leaves of paper manuscript. So is the fine volume[4] of Bruno's works printed by the Ascension Press in 1524; and the folio of Brentius[5] published at Frankfort in 1558, and several other foreign works.

[1] In glass case.
[2] *Early Printed Books*, E. Gordon Duff, p. 196.
[3] xix, B. 2.
[4] iv, B. 1.
[5] ix, D. 6.

A fragment of an *incunabula*, consisting of four sheets, printed at Venice in 1496, may also be seen, bound up at the beginning and end of a folio copy of Dr. Field on *The Church*,[1] printed at Oxford in 1628.

There is a distinct and peculiar interest attaching to books with a "pedigree," entirely independent of the subject-matter of the volumes. A book that has belonged to some famous man in former times, that contains perhaps his name, written, it may be, with his own hand, or with his coat of arms stamped upon the cover, cannot but appeal to the dullest student of bibliography. We have already noticed the additional interest associated with several of our manuscripts, as having belonged to the old Benedictine monastery. The great bulk of our sixteenth and seventeenth-century volumes were once the property of good Bishop Morley, and they still rest in the very same oak bookcases that adorned his library. On the death of William Kingsmill the last Prior and first Dean of Winchester, a layman, one Sir John Mason, Kt., a diplomatist of some distinction, was appointed by Edward VI to the Deanery. On the accession of Queen

[1] xxix, A. 10.

Mary he resigned the position; but a memento of the strange anomaly may be seen in a massive folio,[1] in the original oak boards and binding, on the title-page of which is the following inscription:—"Ex dono Do. Jo. Masonii eq'tis clariss.—1566." Another of our early Deans, appointed by Queen Elizabeth, was, like his contemporary Dr. Turner Dean of Wells "the Father of English Botany," a Doctor, not of Divinity but of Medicine. Dr. John Warner was the first Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford, and for ten years had been a Prebendary of Winchester when, in 1559, he was appointed to the Deanery. I was much interested to find in our Library two scientific folios—a copy of the *De Materia Medica* of Dioscorides,[2] and of Ruellius' *De Natura Stirpium*[3]—both bearing on the fly-leaf the name of John Warner, M.D., "nuper decani, Wynton." The books, interesting in themselves, acquired an additional interest as having belonged to our distinguished medical Dean. For ten years, from 1599 to 1609, George Abbot (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury) was Dean of Winchester. On our shelves may be seen two large folio

[1] xxxiii, c. 2. [2] xxi, e. 3. [3] xx, d. 2.

volumes, the covers of which are stamped with the arms of the See of Canterbury impaling those of George Abbot. These volumes came into the possession of Thomas Ken, who, when he resigned his canonry at Winchester for the bishopric of Bath and Wells, presented them to the Library.[1] Contemporaries of Ken on the Chapter were Dr. John Nicholas, Warden of Winchester College, and Dr. William Hawkins, the son-in-law of Izaak Walton, and it is interesting to find that both these Prebendaries bequeathed books to the Cathedral Library. There is also a fine edition of Laud's *Conference* with Fisher,[2] which belonged to Bishop Morley. But the cover of the book is stamped with the arms of the See of Canterbury impaling those of Laud; and it is, therefore, not improbably the actual copy which once belonged to the Archbishop's library. Dr. Peter Heylin, the Archbishop's chaplain, was a voluminous writer, and among his many works was one on the

[1] It further appears, from Archbishop Abbot's will, that he bequeathed twenty-five volumes to the Dean and Chapter of Winchester "to be put into their library." The books were to be chosen by his executors "with the advice of the Dean or Sub-Dean" from among those in his study at Croydon. I have identified one only of those volumes, viz., xxxi, B. 5.

[2] xxix, B. 11.

duty of obedience to Kings. A copy of this book, entitled, *The Stumbling-Block*,[1] stamped with the royal arms, and containing a fulsome dedication to Charles II in Heylin's own handwriting, is now in our Library. One other book with a "pedigree" may be mentioned. It is an original copy of Jeremy Taylor's *Dissuasive from Popery*,[2] with a dedication, probably in the handwriting of the great preacher, to "The Lord Bishop of Winchester, From the Author. Mar. 12, 1663."

Such are a few of the volumes to be seen in the Cathedral Library. The Library is not, of course, an important one, either in size or richness; but it possesses an interest of its own, and it contains several MSS. and *incunabula* of undoubted value, while many of the volumes belonging to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would add grace and dignity to any collection.

[1] ix, A. 10. [2] In glass case.

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